

Rajasthan Social Watch

Report 2007



Centre for Community Economics and Development
Consultants Society (CECOEDECON)

People's participation in the process of development is indispensable for creating a vibrant and meaningful democracy. Democracy becomes meaningful only when it enables people to demand and enjoy their rights- a phenomenon that gets manifested in people's active participation in delivery of public services, democratic processes and decision making. In this regard, the commitments made by the governing bodies at all levels of governance have to be reiterated and re-examined, so that democracy becomes a reality rather than a mere rhetoric.

In contemporary India, the process of governance is at the crossroads and roles and responsibilities of public institutions are being redefined. In this light, an independent evaluation of these institutions by the civil society will go a long way in enabling Indian citizens to transform themselves from being mere 'passive' voters to 'proactive' citizens. This provides a backdrop for the Social Watch Report 2007.

The report is broadly divided into four sections, examining the performance of the state in different key areas in the year 2007. The first examines the Education scenario in Rajasthan-rhetoric & reality. The second looks at the status of women & the Girl child in Rajasthan. The third section looks at the situation of dalits in Rajasthan. The last section analyses the functioning and role of elected representatives in the development of the state and regions. The Annexure provide the difference

It is hoped that the report will go on the issues of education, the status of local self governance.

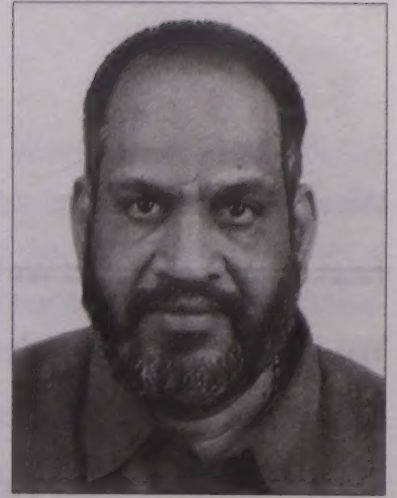
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Preface



Rajasthan, the most colorful state among the twenty-eight states in India, has many contrasts. A tourists paradise it offers the charm of medieval kingdoms forts, the deserts and camels and also the some of cultural tradition moving around extreme orthodoxy- the tradition of Sati (lady immolating in the funeral pyre of the deceased husband.) and deep rooted inhuman practice of untouchability and descent based discrimination in all sphere of life, around rural society.

It is one of the largest and poorest states, covering an area of 342,239 square kilometers i.e. ten percent of the total geographical area- but has only one percent of the country's ground water resources. The state suffers from inadequate rainfall in most parts and a perpetual water shortage.

The state of Rajasthan is divided into 32 districts that are for administrative purposes, further decentralized into 237 development blocks. Each block is formed of scores of villages depending upon a workable population size. The people of Rajasthan are deeply traditional, following a strong hierarchical and patriarchal relationship structure. The state has a total population of 56.5 million people living across 4100 villages. Overall literacy is low and female literacy is as low as 44 percent of the population. Most people survive on subsistence farming or manual labour.

The growth rate of the state economy and the per capita income in the state is far below the national average. Significant number of the world's poor people lives in the Rajasthan alone. The state is ranked 14th among major states on most the Human Development Index. The deplorable socio- economic condition of the state makes it essential for civil society to keep a 'watch' on the institutions of governance in order to ensure their accountability to the people. The "Rajasthan Social Watch Process" is one such initiative. CECOEDECON a leading civil society organization in the state has taken up the role of facilitating the process in the state. The process began in 2004 and strived till date to organize similar organizations and bring out this report.

Rajasthan Social Watch Report is considered as advocacy tool to monitor the plan and commitment to the people and to the achievement of "Millennium Development Goals". The report analyses the performance of the state government and its machineries in implementing various programs for the development and progress of people. In this report five crucial issues have been taken up such as quality of elementary education, the case of girl children and female foeticide, the status of dalits in the state, regional inequalities and backwardness in the state and the devolution of power to local self-governance in the rural area that is Panchayati Raj Institution.

Hope this report will reach out to all sections of the society in Rajasthan and readers will find it useful to charter their demand and ask for accountability. A summary of the report has also been published in Hindi. I would like to express my deep appreciation to N. M. Pati, who has done all the hard work in writing the report. I also sincerely thank Krishna Kumar and his colleagues in making this happen. My appreciations are also due to friends in civil society organizations, those have come forward and supported in making this report a reality.

Sharad Joshi

Convener-Rajasthan Social Watch

Acknowledgement

We wish we could acknowledge every individual who directly or indirectly contributed in the process of writing this first Rajasthan Social Watch report.

We sincerely acknowledge the participation of civil society partners in the brain-storming workshop held at Jaipur. The ideas and view shared by them were immensely useful and helped us to build a framework of this report. The prominent participants were Laxmi Narayan of RVHA, Mahadev Prasad Kumawat of Grammen Ekata Bal Siska Samiti, Ms. Kanta Swami of Gram Chetna Kendra, Om Prakash Arya & Ajnish K. Biswas of CUTS International, Mohitosh Bagra of Gravis, Rishi Rajvanshi of PRATHAM, Satish Kumar of CDR, Prof. Ajit Jain of IIHMR, Dr. Meeta Singh of IFES and many others.

I would like to specially thank Vijay Goel, BARC, Jaipur who not only showed his keen interest in the shaping of the report but also eagerly shared data and information from his institution, which have been used in this report to a great extent. Dr. Kulbhushan Kothari of PRATHAM, Jaipur owes our sincere thanks for his contribution to this report. His voluntary sharing of ASER data and many advises became the source of strength to produce the type of report we have been able to produce.

I would like to extend a very special thanks to Ms. Anju Dwivedi and her team, PRIA Jaipur Chapter. The information shared by their team on Panchayati Raj made me feel secure and gave confidence to write the chapter. Without their help, it would have been difficult. Krishan Kumar and his colleagues in CECOEDECON deserve thanks for their unconditional support and cooperation during the writing of this report. They not only made my work easier by making comfortable logistics arrangement but also fulfilling my demands.

I have always found Sharad Joshi, the founder of CECOEDECON and a strong voice in the civil society efforts, a true authority of marginalized people for up holding their rights. I extend my sincere thanks to him for assigning this responsibility to me and helping me to complete the assignment.

N. M. Pati

Consultant Writer

Executive Summary

Social Watch Process emerged in many countries of the world in the backdrop of UN World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), held in Copenhagen during March 1995. Social Watch Process is a collective initiative of a number of development organizations, social action groups and citizens, with a goal to influence to exert a concerted pressure on the governments to fulfill the commitments. This is a critical initiative by citizens groups, to make the democracy meaningful and participatory.

In India the National Social Watch Coalition (NSWC) is an attempt to build a process of monitoring governance towards professed goals of social development, particularly with respect to the marginalized sections of the country. Today this entire Social Watch movement is catching up as a viable method of eliciting government accountability.

Social Watch is being considered as a movement of the people from Panchayats to Parliament. It is a dynamic process - needs new partners involving in a bigger way in each passing day. Various new tools need to be used to monitor the developments. For this no single organization can take the lead. Social Watch needs to widen its network and become broad base and not recognized as a NGO activity alone. The role of partners like media and parliamentarians are important examples of such broad base.

Rajasthan Social Watch Process is thus an attempt to strengthen the national process. In order to achieve this goal, State Social Watch needs to have a clear understanding about the thematic areas on which a framework could be built by which citizens are able to monitor the performance of the state legislature/government.

"Rajasthan Social Watch Report" may be considered as advocacy tool to monitor the plan and commitment to the people and to the achievement of "Millennium Development Goals". The report analyses the performance of the state government and its machineries in implementing various programs for the development and progress of people. In this report five crucial issues have been taken up such as quality of elementary education, the case of girl children and female foeticide, the status of Dalits in the State, regional inequalities and backwardness in the state and the devolution of power to local self-governance in the rural area that is Panchayati Raj Institution.

Quality of Elementary Education- A critical appraisal

The 2001 census figure gave a chance to rejoice, when it was found that during the decade from 1991- 2001, Rajasthan recorded highest literacy rate in India. Over all literacy levels in the state rose by 23 percent, from 38.6 percent to 61.03 percent, with literacy rate for males moving from 54.99 percent to 76.46 percent and for females from 20.44 to 44.34 percent.

However, 2001 census figures also pointed out large inter-district variations in literacy. Banswara showed the lowest literacy of 44.22 percent (Barmer had the lowest figure of 23 percent in 1991). Rest of the districts showed an improvement of literacy rate to the level of more than fifty percent. While, over all growth rate of literacy in the state was impressive, it did not speak any thing well about the education of women, especially those in rural areas, continued to be low in almost all the districts of the state. In 2001 only seven districts out of thirty-two recorded female literacy rates above fifty percent. Kota continued to record the highest female literacy rate -61.25 percent, while Jalor had the lowest figure of 27.53 percent.

But this high decadal growth rate did not speak the whole truth about the educational scenario of all the regions as well as social groups of the state. Way back in 2002 Government of Rajasthan published a Human Development Report, in which government admitted that "thus the education scenario is doubly constrained: not only is the

achievement level relatively low in absolute terms, but also its distribution across social groups is highly uneven. Therefore, some people suffer more than others in educational terms. That is why large-scale inequalities are observed in the literacy achievements of groups located at the polar extremes of the socio-economic prosperity scale".

Successive governments have not been tired of telling the people of Rajasthan that "The scenario of education in Rajasthan seems to be characterized by the persistence of illiteracy, especially among women. Many children, especially girls, either do not attend school at all or leave it soon after joining." If this was the case a decade ago, what is the improvement taken place as of now?

An analysis of enrolment condition in the districts of Rajasthan reveal that, as many as eight districts like Ajmer, Banswara, Bhilwara, Bikaner, Chittougarh, Dhoulpur, Jaisalmer and Jodhpur more than 15% children (All Children) were found to be out of school. While Bikaner had the highest percent (18.9%) children out of school, the lowest percent was found in Jhunjhunan (1.6%). The question arises therefore, why the situation is better in some districts than that of the others? We hope government can answer this question.

It is an undeniable fact in all these years the focus of Government and all other agencies involved in improving education and literacy has been on the issue of increasing enrolment. While doing so, has there been any attention given to the issue of Quality of education?

The major findings of the ASER study about the learning level of children from std. I to VIII give the following shocking data:

- 66.5 % children in std. - I could not read anything at all
- 25.7% children in std. - II could not read anything at all
- 76%, 87% and 94% children of std. - VI, VII, and VIII could not read story text with some long sentences of std. II levels
- 72.5 % children of std. - I could not recognize any number at all
- 52.8% and 46.4 % children of std. II and III could not recognize numbers.
- 75.1%, 86.4% and 93.4% children of std. VI, VII and VIII respectively could not do division/sums.

It may be mentioned that the question of quality in elementary education is not restricted to Rajasthan alone but is a big problem in many states particularly in the northern parts of India. Recognizing this aspect of education, Planning Commission of India in its Vision 2020 document expressed that "Extending the primary school system to over 500,000 villages in India has brought education to the masses. Unfortunately, this huge quantitative expansion has been accompanied by a tremendous dilution in the quality of schooling. High drop out rates in rural areas is one result of single room schools, with few teaching aids and inadequate instruction both in terms of quantity and quality".

If both government of India and the state governments are so much aware of the fact, then the time has definitely come for the state to think about quality beyond the approach of quantity and coverage.

However, in Rajasthan the regular schooling system has been unable to provide primary education to the disadvantaged groups of the society, namely the Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, women and communities in remote areas. The administrative and institutional structure of school education has been placed directly under the purview of Panchayati Raj since 1999. The aim was to de- centralize the management and control in order to strengthen the ability of the poor and marginal groups to participate in local governance. It was strongly felt that the participation of the people could provide the best answer to face the challenges. In reality there still exists gaps in the performance of the PRIs, because of complex set of rules and regulations thrust upon by bureaucratic

system of governance. Until the local people and the local governance mechanisms are fully functional without any interference the vision of "quality education for all" will remain a distant dream. It would be appropriate to quote here the thinking of our educational planners about the future vision of education in the country.

Women & Girl Children

The health scenario in Rajasthan is still characterized by gender imbalance, low vital rates (lower than the ones for the nation) and an uneven health care coverage. The report further states that "An appraisal of the current health situation and the disease profile of Rajasthan vis-à-vis goals of universal health care shows that there are substantial shortfalls in the efficacy of the public health system in the state. In the early 1950s, the health profile of Rajasthan compared favourably with that of other Indian states, and with the national average. Today, Rajasthan's health indicators are among the poorest in the country, indicating that the state's performance in terms of improvement in vital statistics and case fatality from various diseases has been comparatively lackluster".

Rajasthan is a typical Indian state where strong socio-cultural norms play a very significant role in the development perspective of the state. Much of the ill health condition of the people in general and women/girl child in particular can be strongly correlated to certain social variables such as patriarchal family life, where gender discrimination is rampant. In such a condition, expectant mothers and girl children are generally neglected and women are mostly vulnerable to diseases. Indicators such as life expectancy, infant and child mortality, fertility and other vital rates, as well as of the state's disease profile clearly manifest the vulnerability status of women.

The paradox of Increasing Economic Development & Declining Sex ratio

In spite of the improvements in the last few decades in the health delivery methods, there still exist major differences in male- female health indicators. Women's lives are more at risk in terms of persistent ill-health and death. Most of the health problems among girl children begins in the childhood and continues through adolescence and reproductive years of adulthood. "In the state young girls enter the reproductive phase of their lives as victims of under-nourishment, anemia and fatigue. Their health risks increase with early marriages, frequent pregnancies, unsafe abortions and sexually transmitted diseases. Choices regarding marriage, childbearing and contraception are denied to women. Lack of access to functional reproductive health services contributes to high maternal mortality. Most deliveries are still carried out by untrained birth attendants especially in the rural areas where there is no effective system of referral or management in case complications arise. Though there has been widespread increase of infrastructure services in the state during the past decades, access to these facilities is still varied resulting in very slow change in the mortality rates."

The statistics revealed in the Mortality Statistics of 2006 released by the Bureau of Health Intelligence of the Ministry of Health, government of India, states that nearly half (49.4%) of all female deaths in rural Rajasthan are of girls below the age of 20. An anguished reporter writes that, "Out of these 42% are the girls who have not celebrated their fifth birth day. In short, a girl born in a Rajasthan village will have to be very lucky to be grown up, marry and bear children- things that are taken fairly granted in the modern world".

Rajasthan is not alone in this pathetic state of affairs. The situation is virtually same in the states of UP, Bihar, MP, and Chattisgarh. But is it any consolation. Should the state compete with other backward states and for wrong reasons? Is the government of the day taking note of this fact? This clearly means effort by the government is making any dent into the deep rooted prejudices and attitude towards the girl children in the state. In addition to the abysmal health condition of the women in Rajasthan there is a serious concern about the increasing number of female foeticide.

The Plight of Widows in Rajasthan

In India, volumes have been written on the gender issues and the status of women in various contexts. But very few have actually looked into the issue of widows and their plight. In a recently concluded study entitled "Destitution of Widows in Rajasthan", Subrata Dutta of Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre (BARC), Jaipur has brought out startling revelation about a subject which our readers may be enthusiastic to learn more. This is remarkable field based study done in 22 Blocks of 8 districts by a randomly selected sample size.

Objectives of the study was to assess how far the social security by way of widow pension and BPL facilities have been able to reach the vulnerable widows, by making a quantitative analysis of primary data collected through field survey.

The numbers of women in Rajasthan as per 2001 Census of India was 2,70,87,177 and number of widows are 15,89,726, that is 5.87 percent of the total female population of the state. In other words widows constitute 2.8 percent of the total population of the state. Of the total number of widows, 12,44,074 live in rural areas and 3,45,652 live in urban areas. This means almost 80 percent widows live in rural areas. With the increase in population, the absolute number of widows has been continuously increasing in the state over the years (from 9,13,112 in 1961 to 15,89,726 in 2001). Findings of the study are the following:

- 36 percent widows were unemployed
- 48 percent widows earned their livelihood from unskilled, casual, painstaking heavy work.
- 11.5 percent widows find work for 21- 30 days in a month
- 25.5 percent widows find work for 11- 20 days in a month.
- 17.5 percent widows find work for less than 10 days in a month
- 10 percent widows get lowest wage of Rs. 10- 20 per day
- 16 percent widows receive only Rs. 21- 30 per day
- 31 percent widows receive wage of Rs 30 or more per day.

The study rightly concludes that "Most of the widows are suffering from lack of basic needs and a large proportion of widows are living outside of the safety net. State support through social securities might improve their quality of life. For them state support is essential since due to lack of skill most of them are unable to find gainful employment. They also need to be provided with education and training, but initially what they urgently need is basic support for the sake of their survival as well as dignity. The widow pension of Rs. 250 per month is too little to meet the basic needs. This amount needs to be enhanced, and at the same time a much greater number of widows need to be covered with the safety net of social security. Providing the widows only with BPL card will not simply improve their condition since several BPL facilities are not available at free of cost. They need both the BPL facilities and the widow pension, among others." (Dutta, 2007)

Dalits in Rajasthan

Rajasthan is the second largest atrocity prone state in India. According to Census 2001, the population of Rajasthan state is 5,65,07,188 and Dalits constitute 17.16% (7097706). Rajasthan retains much of its feudal and caste ridden nature of society, characterized by social exclusion, everyday humiliation, discrimination, untouchability and other human rights violations against its Dalit people. Dalits own marginal or very small pieces of agriculture land. The feudal mindset prohibits Dalit access to public services and places and limits their participation in democratic institutions. Dalits live a life of extreme dependency on dominant caste communities for their livelihood, maintain a culture of silence against untouchability and discrimination, have very little space in democratically built institutions and are caught up in the unequal and inhumane system. They live a life of extreme

poverty and lack basic amenities like food, water etc. Although laws exist for securing their rights, unawareness about them, lack of resources and courage to fight for the rights make them silent, compliant and even more vulnerable. The administration, police and politicians, most of the time subscribing to the caste values and biases do not uphold Constitutional provisions and legislations in ensuring fairness, equality or prescribed protection to Dalit communities.

The Dalits are facing denial of rights on the basis of caste system. The Dalit communities continue to suffer from the practice of untouchability and deliberate segregation. This practice of untouchability is both hidden and insidious as well as blatantly open as in the case of segregated all levels. This has severe implications for Dalits more specifically in terms of their access to livelihoods, food sources, water and sanitation facilities and state welfare programmes. Government functionaries are reluctant to provide mandatory services for health, nutrition, and other such basic services in these localities. Hence, while on the one hand Dalits are dealing with poverty and survival issues and on the other they are not receiving the basic services which could have alleviated some of their daily life problems like collecting water, bad sanitary conditions, sending children to school in unsafe conditions and lack of alternative work opportunities for additional income generation.

Rajasthan is a under developed State: Whose concern is it?

In a study undertaken in 2002 by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on the performance of 35 Indian states (20 major and 15 small and UTs), a Composite Index was prepared on the basis of Principal Components Analysis.

The Study clearly showed that the state of Rajasthan was placed in Rank C just above the backward category of D and E who were placed as very backward. It is thus evident from the CII-sponsored study that availability of natural resources like minerals and fertile soils did not ipso facto led to high level of performance. The study further revealed the nature and dimension of Inter regional (district) inequalities in the development mapping of the state. On the basis of a composite sectoral ranking, Top Six and Bottom six districts in various sectors of development were identified.

Backward districts included Jaisalmer, Dhaulpur, Karauli, Barmer, Banswara, Dungarpur and Banswara, which have low ranks in case of majority of sectors covered in this study. It was observed that Jaisalmer had the lowest rank in case of agriculture, banking services and communication, whereas Dhaulpur had been the least developed district in indicators related to power, medical and health services. Barmer, Baran, Banswara, Karauli and Jhalawar also have low ranks in most of the sectors.

Role of Elected Representatives in the Development of Regions

Democratic Federal Political system gives equal opportunity to the people to voice their concerns and demand for development of their respective places of dwelling, so that they are not left behind. People elect their representatives and send them participate in the governance process in the State Legislature and Parliament. Therefore, elected representatives are expected to play crucial role in the development of their respective regions.

It is common knowledge that more the representative is vocal and active he or she is able to do much constructive work for their regions. The glaring examples can be seen in the development of prosperous states and not so prosperous ones. In Rajasthan there lies great inequality among districts. Why such things are happening and why some areas are ahead of the others in terms of development. We find the answer in the role of elected representative.

One of the major indicators of measuring the performance of elected representatives is, to find out what the representative is doing inside the Assembly. Asking questions to the government is considered as a most

important role of the MLAs. Though the questions MLA are able to raise issues related to their regions and also get information about the implementation and progress of different government schemes operating in the area. Government is bound to answer questions raised by the member and provide all necessary answers by safeguarding the lapses. Thus members play a vital role exposing the wrongs and weaknesses of the government in power.

People of Rajasthan elect 200 representatives to the Legislative Assembly, with a hope that they would keep their promise to the people and work for the development of the area. Are they doing their role? Let us examine the following:

Ironically every fourth elected member of the Assembly is found to be sitting silently, preferring not to ask any question in the Assembly. In the Budget session 2007-08 of the State Assembly 45 members did not ask a single question during the entire session. So, it is not very difficult to understand the development pace of one region to the other. (Budget Samachar, May-July, 2007, BARC, Jaipur)

Devolution of Power for Local self-governance

73rd Constitutional amendment Act- 1992 paved the way for Panchayat Raj Institutions to take control of management to accelerate the pace of development at the local level. Government of Rajasthan enacted the Act in 1994, under which Panchayats at all three levels entrusted with duties and functions with regard to 16 subjects listed in the eleventh schedule of the Constitution.

It may be mentioned that all over the country 7 round table discussion took place in 04-05 which was attended by Union Minister of PR, the principal secretary of PR and the minister of PR of each state. The 7 round tables brought 150 recommendations, which aimed at strengthening PRIs in the whole country. Activity mapping was one of the key recommendations, which led to notification of orders for transferring funds, functions and functionaries to panchayats.

However, not satisfied with the progress made by the government of Rajasthan, Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj undertook a critical review of the progress in December 2005. At the end of the review a joint declaration made by the Union Minister for Panchayati Raj and the Chief minister of the state.

As per a report prepared by PRIA Rajasthan Chapter, progress till September, 2007 the agreement reached in the MOU are not yet fully met. In addition final report of Jurisprudence of PRI, prepared by Ministry of Panchayati Raj also lists many a subjects that are contradictory nature as central and state government laws impinge upon the devolution of power to the PRIs.

NREGA in Rajasthan: the present Scenario

The flagship program of Government of India, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 was enforced in February 2006 to provide 100 days of guaranteed employment in a year to any rural household adult, willing to do unskilled manual work. The other major objectives of the Act were to enhance people's livelihoods on a sustained basis and develop the economic and social infrastructure in the rural areas by generating productive assets, protecting environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural-urban migration and fostering social equity etc.

A study by PRIA Rajasthan Chapter in April 2007 in Karauli district found that the major shortcomings were that, all the families registering for jobs are not getting and some of the BPL families are also left out. People are getting low wages than the state wage rate. The management and control is still lying in the hands of government officials. The accounts are in the name of Project Officer and Block Development Officer and they are taking all decisions regarding block level activities. Participation of people in the Gram Sabha is very negligible and so on.

Conclusion

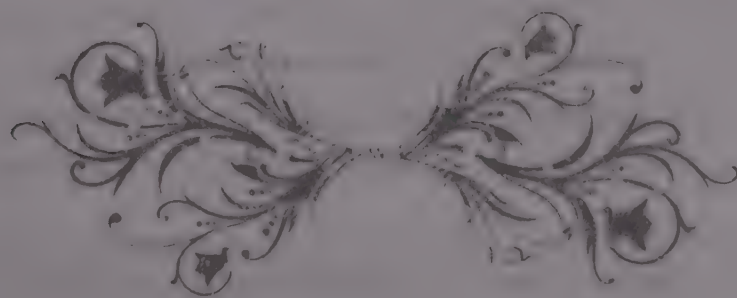
Today, governance is the key issue in the development parlance. People of India after a long struggle for freedom got the nation as a sovereign democratic republic, and started dreaming for a prosperous and peaceful living in the country. After the reorganization of the provinces federal states were created with a unified spirit of centre at the head to govern India as a nation. World's most elaborate written constitution was created to ensure people of the country of all faith, religion and caste to live in pride without affecting their rights and practice their beliefs without any fear or fervor.

Today everything proclaimed in the constitution is found to be functioning. But has the people's aspirations been fulfilled? Is our system of governance delivering the desired result? Is the governance system fully accountable to the people's needs and desires? These are the questions repeatedly coming back to the mind, when one looks at the every possible aspect of the governing structure and functions.

The civil society sector in India have been playing an important role in nation building process and aiming to protect the rights of individuals and the common good by adapting approaches beyond politics. A democratic state cannot be stable unless it is effective and legitimate, with the respect and support of its citizens. Civil society not only checks the details and monitors promises, but also acts as a vital partner in the quest for positive relationship between the democratic state and its citizens.

The Constitution provides for secular government and the protection of religious freedom, and the central/ State Government generally respect these provisions in practice; however, sometimes they do not act effectively to counter societal attacks against religious minorities and attempts by state and local governments to limit religious freedom. This failure results in part from the legal constraints inherent in the country's federal structure, and in part from the law enforcement and justice systems which at times are ineffective. The ineffective investigation and prosecution of attacks on religious minorities is interpreted by some extremist elements as a signal that such violence likely is to go unpunished.

Civil Society in this sense has a significant role to not only diffuse tensions arising out of caste and religious differences but also keep a watchful eye on the governance mechanisms and delivery of services to the people without any discrimination. The national social watch process is one such methodology and a humble attempt to bring facts of governance for better results. The state process of social watch is a further effort to come out with issues that are crucial to the people of the states. Rajasthan Social Watch Report is thus a significant addition to the national effort.



Chapter- 1

Introduction

1.1 Social Watch Process in the World

Social Watch process emerged in many countries of the world in the backdrop of UN World Summit for Social Development (WSSD), held in Copenhagen during March 1995. Social Watch Process is a collective initiative of a number of development organizations, social action groups and citizens, with a goal to influence to exert a concerted pressure on the governments to fulfill the commitments. This is a critical initiative by citizens groups, to make the democracy meaningful and participatory.

1.2 The National Social Watch Coalition (NSWC) - India

What is Social Watch all about? Jagadanand, Convener of National Social Watch Coalition India explains that Social Watch as a brand name is now popular in more than sixty countries of the world. Brazil, Mexico and Philippines are some of the countries, where government accountability is more visible, due to social watch. In India, the effort has entered its fifth year and has some remarkable achievements to its credit. The purpose of social watch is to ensure the government accountability and watch the health of four institutions of democracy such as, Parliament, State legislature, Judiciary and Panchayat.

In India the National Social Watch Coalition (NSWC) is an attempt to build a process of monitoring governance towards professed goals of social development, particularly with respect to the marginalized sections of our country. Today this entire Social Watch movement is catching up as a viable method of eliciting government accountability.

Social Watch is being considered as a movement of the people from Panchayats to Parliament. It is a dynamic process - needs new partners involving in a bigger way in each passing day. Various new tools need to be used to monitor the developments. For this no single organization can take the lead. Social Watch needs to widen its network and become broad base and not recognized as a NGO activity alone. The role of partners like media and parliamentarians are important examples of such broad base.

In this process many a strategic partners have already given valuable inputs and many more would like to join. The collective contribution provides immense value in terms of new ideas as well as authentic scientific data that are vital to establish governance accountability. Today partners in as many as 15 states have keenly taken up Social Watch movement. Strategic Partner Institutions have started providing valuable inputs. By bringing in new partners such as Dalit Groups, Community Organizations, Social Watch has been able create an environment of informed debate. Reports of state partners have made the movement more alive. A collaborative effort with ADR (on Election watch), West Bengal partners (land alienation) and Wada Na Todo (Common Minimum Program) has strengthened the base of social watch coverage. In some cases the reports have been utilized for advocacy campaign and lobby efforts.

Rajasthan Social Watch Process is thus an attempt to strengthen the national process. In order to achieve this goal, State Social Watch needs to have a clear understanding about the thematic areas on which a framework could be built by which citizens are able to monitor the performance of the state legislature/government. These could include three important aspects, such as 1. Commitments made by the state in the shape of MDG. 2. The Common Minimum Program of the government and 3. The issues affecting ordinary people (Education, Health, Livelihood and assets/access etc).

Chapter-2

Educational Scenario in Rajasthan- Rhetoric and the Reality

2.1 Quality of Elementary Education-A critical appraisal

Rajasthan, the state having the largest landmass in India is peculiar in terms of regional variation having terrain in one side and desert and arid zones on the other and in contrast lush green pastures. The livelihood and the cultural identity of the people, therefore, vary from region to region. Devoid of any significant industrial and service sector activities, agriculture and animal husbandry are the major sources of livelihood of the people living in the state. As the acquisition of assets and pattern of income are uneven, the economic capacity of the people in regions also differs to a great extent. In such a socio-economic peculiarity, the pace of development of the regions shows drastically different trends. The level of education and literacy rate is a major indicator of development achievement of a state. After sixty years of independence, Rajasthan is still lagging behind many other states so far as providing education to all sections of the society.

The 2001 census figure gave a chance to rejoice, when it was found that during the decade from 1991- 2001, Rajasthan recorded highest literacy rate in India. Over all literacy levels in the state rose by 23 percent, from 38.6 percent to 61.03 percent, with literacy rate for males moving from 54.99 percent to 76.46 percent and for females from 20.44 to 44.34 percent.

However, 2001 census figures also pointed out large inter-district variations in literacy. Banswara showed the lowest literacy of 44.22 percent (Barmer had the lowest figure of 23 percent in 1991). Rest of the districts showed an improvement of literacy rate to the level of more than fifty percent. While, over all growth rate of literacy in the state was impressive, it did not speak any thing well about the education of women, especially those in rural areas, continued to be low in almost all the districts of the state. In 2001 only seven districts out of thirty-two recorded female literacy rates above fifty percent. Kota continued to record the highest female literacy rate -61.25 percent, while Jalor had the lowest figure of 27.53 percent. District wise literacy rate may be seen at Annexure-3

But this high decadal growth rate did not speak the whole truth about the educational scenario of all the regions as well as social groups of the state. Way back in 2002 Government of Rajasthan published a Human Development Report, in which government admitted that "thus the education scenario is doubly constrained: not only is the achievement level relatively low in absolute terms, but also its distribution across social groups is highly uneven. Therefore, some people suffer more than others in educational terms. That is why large-scale inequalities are observed in the literacy achievements of groups located at the polar extremes of the socio-economic prosperity scale".

The report not only admitted the shortcomings but also identified areas of concern for improvement in the state. Those are:

1. Improving the abysmal educational status of the girl child, (especially among Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes),
2. The challenge of universalizing literacy
3. Ensuring quality education that could sustain a pro-poor pattern of growth.

The report further elaborated that, educational system in Rajasthan needed considerable reform in order to improve the access of marginalized groups (women especially girl children, dalits, migrants and nomadic people

etc.) to the educational infrastructure and reforms must make the system more relevant to the livelihood needs of people, and should enable them to exercise greater control over their lives.

The report recognized a fact that without people's participation "education interventions cannot succeed in the state, given the persistence of low achievements in education in spite of considerable investment in the expansion of education infrastructure. Government admitted the fact that the literacy situation in Rajasthan is quite grim, with many districts being among the most backward in the country in terms of literacy rates, and even more so in terms of female literacy."

Successive governments have not been tired of telling the people of Rajasthan that "The scenario of education in Rajasthan seems to be characterized by the persistence of illiteracy, especially among women. Many children, especially girls, either do not attend school at all or leave it soon after joining." If this was the case a decade ago, what is the improvement taken place as of now? Let us examine the status of Primary education and government's role in the light of the issues as identified above.

2.2 Status of Primary Education in Rajasthan

Box-2.1

Development of Primary Education in Rajasthan after Independence

The momentum for the expansion of education in Rajasthan was reinforced by the constitutional commitment to universalisation of education, as spelt out in the Directive Principles of State Policy in the Constitution of India.¹⁹ The approach to education in the post-Independence era addressed the infrastructure lacuna of the earlier period, which was endemic especially in rural areas. While in 1949, at the time of the formation of the state, the total number of primary schools was 3,195 (2,864 for boys and 331 for girls), by 1981 it was 23,12,520, and this grew to 39,335 by 1991. During the Eighth Plan period (1991 to 1996), the number of primary schools increased by 13 percent and upper primary schools by 32 percent, resulting in a total increase of 17 percent.

In 1932 there were 156 government primary schools, of which only 11 were for girls and 7 were night schools, and 254 private primary schools, of which only 30 were for girls and 2 were night schools. There were also 175 Chatshalas and Maktabas (Government of Jaipur, 1933)

Article 45 of the Constitution enshrines, "The State shall endeavor to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years". The expression "The State" that occurs in the article is defined in Article 12 to include the Government and Parliament of India, the government and the legislature of each of the states and all local or other authorities within the territory of India or under the control of Government of India.

Source: Rajasthan Human Development Report, 2002

2.3 School Enrolment

Mere improvement in literacy figures do not give any idea about how the education scene is likely to evolve. On the contrary, school enrolment is an important indicator of future of children's growth and its impact in the over all development of the state. Three different studies in different time span surprisingly give the same story of girl's education lagging behind. While we present below the findings of these three studies, we wonder what the government has done in successive years to improve the situation, when it was aware of the existence of such a perennial issue

2.3.1 Status of Children in Pre-school

Let us start with the situation prevailing in the state with regard to the pre-school going children, before taking up the status in the primary education. "ASER Report 2006" indicates that even though Balwadi or Anganwadi programs are available in all the districts of the state through ICDS and various privately run schemes by NON government organizations, around 31.3 and 23 percent children in the age group of 4 and 5 years were not found to be enrolled. Together they constitute 54.3 %, (see Table-2.1), means more than half the child population remained out side of the pre school facilities.

Table-2.1 Children in Balwadi/Anganwadi or in School in 2006
(% Children in pre-school or school)

Age	In Balwadi or Aanganwadi	In School			No Where	Total
		Govt.	Private	Other		
Age : 3 ALL	63.2	-	-	-	36.7	100
Age : 4 ALL	68.3	-	-	-	31.1	100
Age : 5 ALL	6.0	48.5	22.2	0.3	23.0	100
Age : 6 ALL	0.8	59.4	28.6	0.3	10.9	100

(Source: Annual Status of Education Report, 2006)

Further ASER Report 2007 shows that 39.2 and 8.6 percent children in the age group of 4 and 5 years were not enrolled. Together they constitute 47.8 %, (see Table-2.2), means almost half the child population still remained out side of the pre school facilities. In this age children were supposed to attend Anganwadi/Balwadi centres so as to benefit from the provisions of Integrated Child Development Scheme sponsored by the Government of India and also prepare them for the basic education starting with primary schooling. The reasons for this state of affair may be ascribed to the fact that not too much importance is given to the issue of early child care activities. ICDS is taken more as a mother and child health care program and less as an activity for educational preparedness of the child. This scenario, itself gives some indication about status the enrolment pattern of 6 to 14 years children in the state.

Conclusively enrolment of 4 and 5 year children have improved marginally in the year 2007, still this issue needs to be addressed effectively.

Table-2.2 Children in Balwadi/Anganwadi or in School in 2007
(% Children in pre-school or school)

Age	In Balwadi or Aanganwadi	In School			No Where	Total
		Govt.	Private	Other		
Age : 3 ALL	60.1	-	-	-	39.9	100
Age : 4 ALL	60.8	-	-	-	39.2	100
Age : 5 ALL	11.7	48.6	30.1	1.1	8.6	100
Age : 6 ALL	3.2	60.5	29.6	0.6	6.0	100

(Source: Annual Status of Education Report, 2007)

2.3.2 School enrolment of 6 -14 years Children

The overall enrolment rate in schools for the age group of five to fourteen years in Rajasthan was estimated in 1998/99 at 67.6 percent. The enrolment percent during the period for boys was estimated at 85 percent, while girls still lag far behind at 48 percent. Rajasthan Human Development Report 2002 puts the female enrolment abysmally low in all the thirty two districts in the state. In 24 districts the enrolment of girls varied between 10 to 20 percent, in six districts the figure was between 20 to 30 percent, whereas in Barmer and jalore district girls enrolment was as low as 8.9 and 7.8 percent.

In another report by NIEPA 2002-03 indicated that while 46.5% girls were enrolled in primary school, in upper primary the figure was 38.8%. So there was 7% fall in enrolment. In primary plus upper primary the figure was 41.5 and primary plus secondary the figure came down to 38.8% and in upper primary plus secondary level the figure further came down to 33.8%.

Mere enrolment rate also do not always reflect the actual number of children attending schools with regularity. As evident in the above figures the number of children enrolled in class I in all schools, especially in rural areas, drop sharply after initial enrolment and by class II and beyond, it drops even further.

Table-2.3 School Enrolment and out of School Children in Rajasthan in 2006

Age Group	% Children enrolled in each agegroup in different types of schools			% Children out of school	Total
	Govt.	Pvt.	Other (Madarsa+ EGS)	Not in school (Never enrolled or drop out)	
6-14 All	63.6	25.2	0.4	10.8	100
7-16 All	62.7	23.1	0.3	13.9	100
7-10 All	63.3	28.3	0.5	8.0	100
7-10 Boys	62.8	31.1	0.5	5.6	100
7-10 Girls	64.0	24.6	0.5	11.0	100
11-14 All	64.8	21.0	0.3	13.9	100
11-14 Boys	66.1	23.7	0.3	9.9	100
11-14 Girls	63.1	17.1	0.2	19.6	100
15-16 All	56.8	15.2	0.1	27.8	100
15-16 Boys	60.5	16.8	0.0	22.6	100
15-16 Girls	49.8	12.2	0.3	37.7	100

(Source: ASER, 2006)

In a most recent report namely Annual Status of Education Report (ASER), January 2006 Published by PRATHAM, a nationally renowned non government organization, has given startling revelation about the trend in enrolment in education in the state. The study was conducted in all the 32 districts covering 621 schools and 27163 children in the age group of 7-16 years. The findings pointed out that 94.4% enrolment found in case of boys in 7-10 age group whereas it was 89.1% in case of girls in the same age group. The percentage girls who were never in school plus drop out in the same age category was 11 percent in comparison to only 5.7% in case of boys. In 11-14 years age category, the enrolment percent of boys was 90.1% and that of girls was 80.4%. Again while 9.9% Boys were never in school plus dropped out, 19.6% girls were either never in school or drooped out.

In 15-16 year age category 77.3% boys and 62.3% girls were found to be enrolled in various schools. But very high percent boys (22.6) and girls (37.7) were found to be either dropped out or never been to school. Further details may be seen in the following Table-2.3 regarding school enrolment and out of school children in the year 2006.

Further Annual Status of Education Report (ASER, 2007) reveals that 97.1% enrolment found in case of boys in 7-10 age groups whereas it was 94% in case of girls in the same age group. The percentage girls who were never in school plus drop out in the same age category was 6 percent in comparison to only 2.9% in case of boys. In 11-14 years age category, the enrolment percent of boys was 93.7% and that of girls was 85.6%. Again while 6.3% boys were never in school plus dropped out, 14.4% girls were either never in school or drooped out.

In 15-16 year age category 77.6% boys and 67.8% girls were found to be enrolled in various schools. But very high percent of boys (22.4) and girls (32.2) were found to be either dropped out or never been to school. From the data, it becomes clear that in each age category higher percentage of girls are out of school education. This means even if there is a growth in literacy rate, the basic education of girls remains unfulfilled task by the government. Details may be seen in the following Tables-2.4 and 2.5 regarding school enrolment and out of school children.

Table-2.4 School Enrolment and out of School Children in Rajasthan in 2007

Age Group	% Children enrolled in each age-group in different types of schools			% Children out of school	Total
	Govt.	Pvt.	Other (Madarsa+ EGS)	Not in school (Never enrolled or drop out)	
6-14 All	66.3	26.7	0.4	6.5	100
7-16 All	64.7	25.3	0.4	9.6	100
7-10 All	66.7	28.5	0.6	4.3	100
7-10 Boys	65.0	31.6	0.5	2.9	100
7-10 Girls	68.9	24.4	0.7	6.0	100
11-14 All	66.4	23.7	0.2	9.7	100
11-14 Boys	67.2	26.3	0.2	6.3	100
11-14 Girls	65.3	20.0	0.4	14.4	100
15-16 All	54.0	19.6	0.3	26.2	100
15-16 Boys	56.0	21.3	0.3	22.4	100
15-16 Girls	50.7	16.7	0.4	32.2	100

(Source: ASER, 2007)

Table-2.5 Age by standard for school children

Std.	% Children in each standard by age												Total
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
I	34.5	36.1	14.8	9.1	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	100
II	9.6	24.0	25.8	24.1	6.0	6.0	0.0	0.0	4.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	100

(Source: ASER, 2006)

An analysis of enrolment condition in the districts of Rajasthan reveal that, as many as eight districts like Ajmer, Banswara, Bhilwara, Bikaner, Chittorgarh, Dholpur, Jaisalmer and Jodhpur more than 15% children (All Children) were found to be out of school. While Bikaner had the highest percent (18.9%) children out of school, the lowest percent was found in Jhunjhunan (1.6%). The question arises therefore, why the situation is better in some districts than that of the others? We hope government can answer this question.

It is an undeniable fact in all these years the focus of Government and all other agencies involved in improving education and literacy has been on the issue of increasing enrolment. While doing so, has there been any attention given to the issue of quality of education? The following data by ASER would tell us the exact position in this regard.

2.3.3 Quality of Education in Primary level in the state and all the districts

In the Rajasthan Human Development Report 2002-03, the state government had stated about the quality of primary education by quoting the figures of a study conducted by the Institute of Education Research and Training (SIERT). The report said that "the achievement levels of students who do complete primary education, which concentrates on the three "Rs" (reading, writing and arithmetic), paint an equally disturbing picture. The achievement levels in 10 DPEP districts, according to the Baseline Assessment Study conducted by the State Institute of Education Research and Training (SIERT), are generally low. The mean achievement score of class IV students in Mathematics was found to be ranging between 10.66 (22.56 percent) and 17.67 (34.15 percent), while for language, the range was between 29.00 (40.58 percent) and 38.83 (49.09 percent).

If this was the case and government was aware of the problem, then was there any action taken in due course to correct the situation. A most recent study by PRATHAM a leading non government organization has once again brought the following facts about the quality issue in primary education. The report once again confirms the continuation of the same old problem. Let us look into the ASER Report 2005 in detail to find out the difference if any has happened.

While conducting the study in 2005, ASER tried to categorize the performance of children in two levels. The tests were carried out to find the Reading ability and Numerical ability of the children up to 14 years and school standard -VIII. In Level- 1 the test was carried out to find the "Ability to read a small paragraph with short sentences of std. 1 level difficulty. In Level -2, the test was carried out to find the ability to read a story text with some long sentences of std. 2 level difficulty. For the purpose of testing numerical ability, the children were asked for doing a 2 digit subtraction with borrowing and for Division of 3 digits divided by 1 digit. The results of the study are presented in the following Table-2.6

Table-2.6 Learning Ability

Age Group	% Children who cannot read		% Children who cannot solve numerical written sums...	
	Level - 1	Level - 2	Subtraction or Division	Division
Age: 7 - 14 All	36.5	51.4	42.2	61.1
Age: 7 -10 All	49.9	66.9	55.6	75.7
Age: 11 - 14 All	19.3	31.5	25.1	42.3
Govt.: Std. II - V	49.5	68.3	55.3	78.4
Pvt.: Std. II - V	31.7	53.0	38.2	62.2
Govt.: Std. VI - VIII	7.0	19.5	14.0	33.5
Pvt.: Std. VI - VIII	4.2	13.0	8.4	20.4

(Source: ASER -2005)

With regard to the performance of children in the state as a whole, it was found that merely 59.1 percent children of Standard- V could read level- 2 and only 45.2 % children of Standard- V could solve division and subtraction. This data presents a clear indication of quality of learning in the state.

2.3.4 Learning Level of Children in Respective Std. (1-VIII)

The major findings of the ASER, 2005 study about the learning level of children from Standard I to VIII give shocking data. This may be seen in the following Tables-2.7 and 2.8

- 66.5 % children in Standard- 1 could not read anything at all.
- 25.7% children in Standard- 2 could not read anything at all.
- 76%, 87% and 94% children of Standard- VI, VII, and VIII could not read story text with some long sentences of std. 2 levels.
- 72.5 % children of Standard- 1 could not recognize any number at all.
- 52.8% and 46.4 % children of Standard II and III could not recognize numbers.
- 75.1%, 86.4% and 93.4% children of Standard VI, VII and VIII respectively could not to do division sums.

Table-2.7 Learning Level of Children in Respective Std. (I- VIII) (Reading)

Std.	Reading: % Children who can read					Total
	Nothing	Letter	Word	Level 1 (Std. 1) text	Level 2 (Std.2) text	
I	66.5	23.2	8.2	1.3	0.8	100
II	25.7	34.9	26.1	8.2	5.1	100
III	9.6	19.5	32.5	22.2	16.2	100
IV	3.4	8.5	19.8	31.9	36.4	100
V	2.1	4.7	10.7	26.5	56.0	100
VI	0.7	1.8	5.1	16.5	76.0	100
VII	0.4	0.5	2.1	9.9	87.1	100
VIII	0.1	0.4	0.7	4.8	94.1	100
Total	14.2	12.4	13.8	15.3	44.4	100

(Source: ASER- 2005)

Table-2.8 Learning Level of Children in Respective Std. (I- VIII) (Arithmetic)

Std.	Arithmetic: % Children who can solve Arithmetic				Total
	Nothing	Recognize Number	Subtract	Divide	
I	72.5	25.2	1.4	0.8	100
II	32.9	52.8	9.4	4.8	100
III	13.6	46.4	24.6	15.4	100
IV	5.7	25.7	33.5	35.1	100
V	3.7	15.6	26.7	54.1	100
VI	1.9	6.5	16.6	75.1	100
VII	0.6	2.9	10.1	86.4	100
VIII	0.2	1.5	5.0	93.4	100
Total	17.2	23.2	16.1	43.6	100

(Source: ASER- 2005)

Similar study was conducted in the year 2007 by same organization. The major findings of the ASER, 2007 study about the learning level of children from Standard I to VIII give following data. This may be seen in the following Tables-2.9 and 2.10

- 45.0 % children in Standard- 1 could not read anything at all.
- 16.0% children in Standard- 2 could not read anything at all.
- 69.3%, 82.1% and 90.6% children of Standard- VI, VII, and VIII could not read story text with some long sentences of std. 2 levels.
- 42.2 % children of Standard- 1 could not recognize any number at all.
- 73.1% and 62.3 % children of Standard II and III could not recognize numbers up to 99.
- 52.7%, 67.2% and 79.2% children of Standard VI, VII and VIII respectively could not to do division arithmetic.

Table-2.9 Learning Level of Children in Respective Std. (I- VIII) (Reading)

Std.	Reading: % Children who can read					Total
	Nothing	Letter	Word	Level 1 (Std. 1) text	Level 2 (Std.2) text	
I	45.0	43.0	8.6	1.8	1.6	100
II	16.0	42.5	29.1	7.5	5.0	100
III	5.8	22.7	35.7	20.8	15.0	100
IV	2.3	11.5	25.2	28.8	32.2	100
V	1.2	5.9	15.7	26.3	50.9	100
VI	0.7	2.9	7.7	19.5	69.3	100
VII	0.4	1.0	2.9	13.6	82.1	100
VIII	0.1	0.9	1.7	6.6	90.6	100
Total	9.6	17.4	16.6	15.7	40.8	100

(Source: ASER- 2007)

Table-2.10 Learning Level of Children in Respective Std. (I- VIII) (Arithmetic)

Std.	Arithmetic: % Children who can solve Arithmetic				Total
	Nothing	Recognize Number	Subtract	Divide	
I	42.2	55.7	1.3	0.8	100
II	16.2	73.1	8.5	2.1	100
III	7.1	62.3	23.0	7.5	100
IV	3.4	44.0	31.8	20.9	100
V	1.7	28.1	33.2	37.1	100
VI	1.0	19.1	27.3	52.7	100
VII	0.6	9.9	22.2	67.2	100
VIII	0.2	5.8	14.9	79.2	100
Total	9.6	38.9	20.2	31.3	100

(Source: ASER- 2007)

Conclusively although learning level of children of Standard I to VIII have been improved significantly in the year 2007 if compared with that of year 2005, it needs to be improved more.

2.4 Performance of Districts

The state has shown very dismal picture in pre-primary and primary education. ASER, 2007 report reveals that only 60.5 percent children of 3-4 years of age group were enrolled in Anganwari and other pre-schools Institutions while 6.5 percent children were out of school in the 6-14 years of age group. It is satisfying to note that 26.7 percent children in the state were enrolled in private schools. While the state figure presents such a grim state of affairs, the performance of children in some of the districts gives a very discouraging picture. In Ajmer, Banswara, Dungarpur, Jaisalmer, Jhalawar, Baran, Bikaner, Churu, Pali, Udaipur and Sirohi districts, less than 50 percent children of Standard 3-5 had the ability to solve division and subtraction. Further only 12.6 percent children of standard 3-5 had the ability to read sentences in English. Among all the districts Dungarpur, Udaipur, Banswara and Sirohi had the worst performance in almost every parameter. Very interestingly, in six districts almost 50% children lack the ability to read and in as many as 15 districts children lack the numerical ability in varying percentage. Details of performance of all districts are shown in the following Table-2.11

Table-2.11 Performance of Districts

Districts	Pre-school	Out of school	Private School	Standard 1-2: Learning Levels			Standard 3-5: Learning Levels		
	% Children (Age 3-4) in Anganwari or other Pre-school	% Children (Age 6-14) Out of school	% Children (Age 6-14) in Private school	% Children (Std. 1-2) who can read letters, words	% Children (Std. 1-2) who can recognize numbers (1-9) or more	% Children (Std. 1-2) who can read letters or more in	% Children (Std. 3-5) who can read Level 1 text	% Children (Std. 3-5) who can Subtract or do more	% Children (Std. 3-5) who can read sentences in English
Ajmer	72.5	8.2	17.5	64.2	67.8	48.9	58.4	46.6	9.0
Alwar	66.7	5.0	36.3	71.3	74.1	52.9	66.8	65.4	23.6
Banswara	75.0	10.5	11.0	52.0	57.1	33.7	30.6	17.4	2.3
Baran	65.2	6.2	23.1	61.2	65.9	39.3	47.9	47.1	8.8
Barmer	55.1	9.0	3.8	63.3	62.1	52.7	66.7	66.2	31.6
Bharatpur	49.0	6.2	46.3	64.0	66.7	57.5	60.4	59.4	23.5
Bhilwara	71.6	5.4	9.6	87.4	85.3	55.0	60.1	51.4	10.8
Bikaner	53.4	14.1	26.7	60.1	58.6	32.7	57.4	41.1	7.7
Bundi	58.5	5.4	19.7	78.2	78.1	51.8	53.2	51.5	9.2
Chittaugarh	81.0	5.2	12.5	67.7	64.5	33.5	51.2	42.2	6.7
Churu	72.5	7.8	43.2	61.5	58.0	33.0	52.7	42.1	7.2
Dausa	49.0	3.4	31.1	71.4	69.1	45.1	64.9	57.7	16.1
Dhaulpur	56.9	5.5	28.2	68.5	73.1	48.7	51.2	49.5	12.6
Dungarpur	62.8	9.1	10.2	79.8	81.4	46.2	48.6	38.2	4.2
Ganganagar	48.9	6.3	32.2	87.7	88.1	69.4	76.5	80.9	14.1
Hanumangarh	78.8	2.7	35.7	77.3	75.1	52.6	73.5	58.1	15.9
Jaipur	45.5	2.3	38.8	71.5	75.5	51.6	67.9	64.3	15.5
Jaisalmer	63.6	14.3	4.0	60.5	67.8	40.7	53.5	46.7	8.8
Jalor	71.5	9.6	13.1	58.7	55.7	34.6	55.4	48.5	8.9
Jhalawar	75.6	10.2	17.7	67.2	68.0	40.3	49.9	42.2	8.6
Jhunjhunu	44.6	1.6	48.5	76.2	76.0	56.1	72.4	65.2	23.8
Jodhpur	56.0	9.9	24.3	69.3	68.0	53.7	58.4	45.3	12.9
Karauli	43.1	5.9	32.9	64.0	68.3	47.6	52.2	50.0	8.1
Kota	40.9	3.2	47.2	68.5	71.8	47.5	50.4	45.0	11.7

(Source: ASER- 2007)

2.5 Performance of Top Five and Bottom Five Districts in State

For the purpose of better understanding about the performance of the districts in relation to quality of education, ASER had categorized the districts as Top Five and Bottom Five districts. The facts are presented in the following Table-2.12

Table-2.12 Performance of Top Five and Bottom Five Districts in State

Reading	% Std. V Cannot Solve Level -2	Arithmetic	% Std. V Cannot Solve Division
TOP - 5		TOP - 5	
Churu	19.8	Churu	21.7
Barmer	20.2	Hanumangarh	24.6
Sikar	21.2	Jalor	27.2
Jalor	26.7	Sikar	34.4
Ganganagar	27.9	Barmer	39.1
Bottom - 5		Bottom - 5	
Sirohi	77.8	Banswara	82.3
Dungarpur	61.3	Dungarpur	78.2
Ajmer	58.2	Ajmer	78.0
Jhalawar	57.1	Sirohi	77.6
Jaipur	54.6	Nagaur	72.8

Source: ASER -2006

2.6 Performance of Children in Government and Private Schools

Another interesting finding of the study was comparative performance level of children studying in government and private schools. What is the performance level of Std. - V children in these two types of schools? While 46 % children in Std. - V had the ability to read level -2, in private school 68% had the same ability. Similarly, merely 42% children of Std.-V were able to solve Division and Subtraction, where as almost 65 % children in private schools had the same ability. This clearly speaks about the quality of learning or should we conclude that it also reflects the quality of teaching in the government schools. Why it is so, is the government taking note of such findings of a respectable study done by a respectable organization?

Strategies for Quality Improvement in 10th Plan Document, Government of India

While the goals of universal literacy and enrolments are laudable in themselves, the achievements in these areas would remain hollow without ensuring quality education. A qualitative improvement in the content and processes of basic education, in order to make them more responsive to the learning needs of individuals and the development needs of different socioeconomic sectors, continues to be a major challenge. The challenge for providing quality education at the elementary level involves improvements in the preparation, motivation and deployment of teachers, the quality of textbooks and of infrastructural facilities. It also involves making education relevant to society's needs and strengthening the management and institutional capacity of educational institutions especially at the state, district and local levels.

2.7 School Related Indicators

Apart from parental education and socio-economic condition, enrolment of children and quality of education are related to a number of factors. These factors directly or indirectly influence the performance level of children and also act as a de motivation cause for the parents. In a report on Elementary Education in India, NIEPPA, 2002-03 reported the following data.

Table-2.13 School Related Indicators

School Related Indicators	Primary	Upper Primary
% Single Class room Schools	4.2	2.0
% Single Teacher Schools	39.6	4.8
% Schools with Common Toilets	29.6	59.9
% Schools with Girls Toilets	13.4	44.1
% Schools with Drinking Water Facility	64.0	81.7
% No female teacher Schools	36.0	42.5
% Enrollment in Single Teacher Schools	24.9	2.4
% Enrollment in schools without building	8.6	1.3
% Enrollment in schools without Black Board	10.8	10.8
% Female Teachers	24.2	27.1
Pupil Teacher Ratio (PTR)	43	27
Student Class Room Ratio (SCR)	38	29

Source: Elementary Education In India 2002-03

In the above table one could find that in as many as nearly 40 percent primary schools only one teacher is available. So far as facilities like toilets are concerned almost 60% upper primary schools have common toilets and only in 44% schools have separate facilities. This may be a good reason why there are a high percentage of dropouts among young girl children from continuing education further. Although drinking water facilities are available in many schools, still these facilities are yet to be available in all the schools. The reason for non availability of such basic is very difficult to understand. Another point which comes to mind that even if toilet and drinking water facilities are available, how many of them are in usable condition. Knowing the condition of schools in the rural areas one can easily imagine the real condition.

There are some other interesting data. Usually where there is female teacher, parents are more inclined to enroll there children in the primary level of schooling. But in Rajasthan in 36% and 42.5% primary and upper primary schools, no female teachers are available. Out of the total teachers strength, female teacher constitute only 24.2 and 27.1 in primary and upper primary schools. In the state there are schools neither having any building nor a black board to write. The figure states that enrolment percent in schools without building in primary is only 8.6 % and in upper primary only 1.3%. The enrolment percent in schools without black board is only 10.8 in both the primary and upper primary level.

2.8 Teacher and Student Attendance in Primary and Upper Primary Schools

5.8.1 Teacher's Attendance

ASER- 2005 and 2007 reports present a dismal picture about the attendance record of teacher and student in the primary and upper primary schools. Out of 321 and 281 primary and upper primary schools visited in the year 2005, only 80.7% teachers found attending primary schools and 79.2% in upper primary level while this figure for the year 2007 was 91.6% and 85.4% respectively. This means large percentage of teacher is not attending schools at all. Over all the study found that during the year 2005, in only 55.5% and 37.5% primary and upper primary schools all teachers were present while the figure for the year 2007 was 75.0% and 49.6% respectively. Details are given in the following Table-2.14

Table-2.14 Teachers Attendance

Teachers Attendance	2005		2007	
	Std. 1-4/5	Std. 1-8	Std. 1-4/5	Std. 1-8
% teachers attending (Average)	80.7	79.2	91.6	85.4
% schools with no teacher present	5.4	1.8	0.3	0.8
% schools with all teacher present	55.5	37.5	75.0	49.6

5.8.2 Student's (Children's) Attendance

When teacher's attendance depicts such sorry story, can there be a happy picture about enrolled children's attendance in schools? Perhaps not! Because only 71.3% and 75.2% enrolled children found to be attending primary and upper primary schools, as the study revealed in year 2005 while this figure for the year 2007 was 67.3% and 72.4% for primary and upper primary schools respectively. Further, in 11.8% and 4.4% primary and upper primary schools less than 50% enrolled children are attending schools. Details are given in the following table- 2.15

Table-2.15 Children's Attendance

Children's Attendance	2005		2007	
	Std. 1-4/5	Std. 1-8	Std. 1-4/5	Std. 1-8
% enrolled children attending (Average)	71.3	75.2	67.3	72.4
% schools with less than 50% enrolled children attending	11.8	4.4	14.9	9.1
% schools with 75% and more enrolled children attending	49.2	56.0	40.1	53.2

(Source: ASER- 2007)

The above analysis clearly reveals the real status of basic education in the state. If the teacher and student school attendance record is so dismal, it is not very difficult to understand why the quality of elementary education is not up to the desired level in the state.

It may be mentioned that the question of quality in elementary education is not restricted to Rajasthan alone but

is a big problem in many states particularly in the northern parts of India. Recognizing this aspect of education, Planning Commission of India in its Vision 2020 document expressed that "Extending the primary school system to over 500,000 villages in India has brought education to the masses. Unfortunately, this huge quantitative expansion has been accompanied by a tremendous dilution in the quality of schooling. High drop out rates in rural areas is one result of single room schools, with few teaching aids and inadequate instruction both in terms of quantity and quality".

If both government of India and the state governments are so much aware of the fact, then the time has definitely come for the state to think about quality beyond the approach of quantity and coverage.

5.9 Children-Teacher Ratio

ASER study 2005 shows that, 40.1 children enrolled on every appointed teacher in primary schools and 35.5 children enrolled on every appointed teacher in upper primary schools. This condition was more or less same in the year 2007 with 35.7 and 37.1 children respectively in primary and upper primary schools. Conclusively children-teacher ratio must be improved in order to pick up quality of education in these schools. Details are given in the following Table-2.16

Table-2.16 Children-teacher ratio

Children-teacher ratio (Median)	2005		2007	
	Std. 1-4/5	Std. 1-8	Std. 1-4/5	Std. 1-8
Based on children enrolled & teacher appointed	40.1	35.5	35.7	37.1
Based on children & teacher present	33.4	33.8	26.0	29.6

(Source: ASER- 2007)

2.10 Role of Local Self-Governance system (PRI) In Augmenting Elementary Education

In compliance of Article 40 of the Constitution and the 73rd amendment, Rajasthan Government transferred 16 subjects to the Panchayati Raj. Elementary Education in Rajasthan is now with the three tier Panchayati Raj institutions, i.e. Zila Parishads at district level, Panchayat Samitis at the block level, and Gram Panchayats at the village level.

It may be noted that the system of accountability is highly centralized and planning is mostly a top down one, in terms of programme management, design and implementation. Even a decentralized approach to planning is not fully decentralized in true spirit. Communities, therefore, have limited options to operate as they are governed by the complex criteria, rules and regulations set by planners at the state level.

As per the Rajasthan PRI act, the standing committee on education is mandatory at GP level, PS and at ZP level. It is one of the 6 committees required as per the PRI (Rajasthan) act. Mere formation of committees does not imply its functioning. For the functioning of institutions, it is important that three Fs (funds, functions and functionaries) need to be transferred to PRIs. Due to lack of devolution, only partial devolution has taken place. At GP level, the role of monitoring the mid day meal and Gandhi pustakalaya is with Panchayats, but no other functions remain with them. However, at PS level and ZP level, the administrative power of 17 CC is with PS and ZP members. Partial devolution of functions and functionaries but with no devolution of finance is crippling the PRIs.

The parent department- education department holds major powers; even the committees formed under the departments supersede the committees under PRIs. For instance, in the current framework of SSA there is also

no proper linkage of the institutions created under the SSA and the PRIs. Though at the zila parishad and the panchayat samiti head of the PRIs also heads the institutions of management of the SSA but at the panchayat this also, does not exist at all. The SDMC created at the school level has been entrusted with all the management of the SSA with teachers as head, and there is token representation of ERs. This institution has no accountability and linkage with the panchayat as an institution.

This calls for greater attention towards devolution of funds, functionaries and functions to constitutionally mandated bodies, PRIs and strengthen the standing committees of Education. So even if PRIs have been given the governance role to augment elementary education in the state, there are many odds to effectively carry out their responsibility. The following expectations have not been achieved so far.

People or communities are not aware of and do not have a clear understanding about the power and authority devolved to PRIs, for meaningful participation in the process.

Greater community participation is expected for promoting enrolment, retention and other aspects of education. That is not happening. As it stands now, it is almost another form of bureaucratic arrangement.

Secondly local institutions lack the capacity to manage the system of education, since nothing concrete has been done to strengthen their capacity. The 10th Plan Document- Elementary Education, Government of India) envisages that "The qualitative participation should mean that the community is able to have a voice and exercise its choice. It also involves the development of human, organizational and management capacity to solve problems and sustain the improvements.

PRIs and grassroot level organizations like VECs, PTAs, MTAs etc. who are required to become the vehicles of community mobilization, have not yet been actively functional.

Community-based monitoring system has not yet been evolved.

Making community mobilization through intensive micro-planning and school mapping is no where in sight.

In a highly stratified and patriarchal societal culture, the inclusive management of the education at the local level poses a difficult challenge. Even though the problems pose some constraints, there has to be a way out to come of the existing situation of our elementary education and build a strong foundation to shape the future of formal education in the state with a focus on removing all the barriers to achieve hundred percent success in the education of girl children, children from Dalit, Minority and tribal communities in the state.

2.11 Plethora of Education Schemes (beyond formal Education System) and the ground reality

Following the Lord Macaulay's legacy, after the independence, the government of our times patronized the system of formal schooling system. But this system has invariably failed to tackle "the issues of numbers, universal enrolment and retention, imparting quality education, and actualizing acceptable achievement levels. This led the government to look for alternatives, which emerged from evaluation of the formal education system and were planned to counter the problems faced through lack of finances, incidence of non-attendance of children, irregularity of teachers, etc."

Over the years Government of Rajasthan has implemented several major programmes to improve the formal education system and to provide access to education to those children who were unable to take the benefit of formal schooling system. Some of the major educational programs implemented in the state are:

- Non-Formal Education Programme
- Shiksha Karmi Project
- Lok Jumbish Pariyojana
- Rajiv Gandhi Swarna Jayanti Pathshalas

- District Primary Education Programme
- Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

We will discuss in the following about some of the major programs out of the above list and find out what these projects are able to achieve.

2.11.1 Shiksha Karmi Project and Lok Jumbish Project in Rajasthan

Shiksha Karmi and Lok Jumbish were two externally-aided projects for basic education implemented in Rajasthan. Both these projects were considered as innovative which had primary focus on gender along with two other goals such as universalizing elementary education and improving the quality of education in remote and socially backward villages. The projects aimed to address some of the major obstacles in achieving UEE, namely, teacher absenteeism, high drop-out rate, working children, uninteresting teaching methods, lack of contextual learning materials, low motivation and competence of teachers, a centralized and inflexible approach etc.

Shiksha Karmi Project: The project had a special emphasis on community participation because of which Village Education Committees (VECs) were formed and have contributed a great deal to the improvement of the school environment, augmentation of infrastructure and facilities, larger enrolment of children through school mapping and micro-planning in the Shiksha Karmi schools. The Shiksha Karmi project covered 2,708 villages in 147 blocks spread over 31 districts. As per government's assessment the project has been able to achieve a seven-fold increase in the enrolment of children in schools taken over by the project.

The Lok Jumbish "project has been able to set up innovative management structures incorporating the principles of decentralization and delegation of authority as well as building partnerships with local communities and the voluntary sector. The project has also made a positive contribution to quality improvement through the development of improved MLL-based textbooks for Classes I-IV, which is also being used in all schools in Rajasthan. It has conducted school mapping in 8,921 villages, opened 2,560 Sahaj Shiksha Centres covering 47,000 children and started 529 new primary schools and 268 upper primary schools. The programme has also strengthened 239 pre-school centres of anganwadis and formed over 7,600 Mahila Groups".

2.11.2 Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan

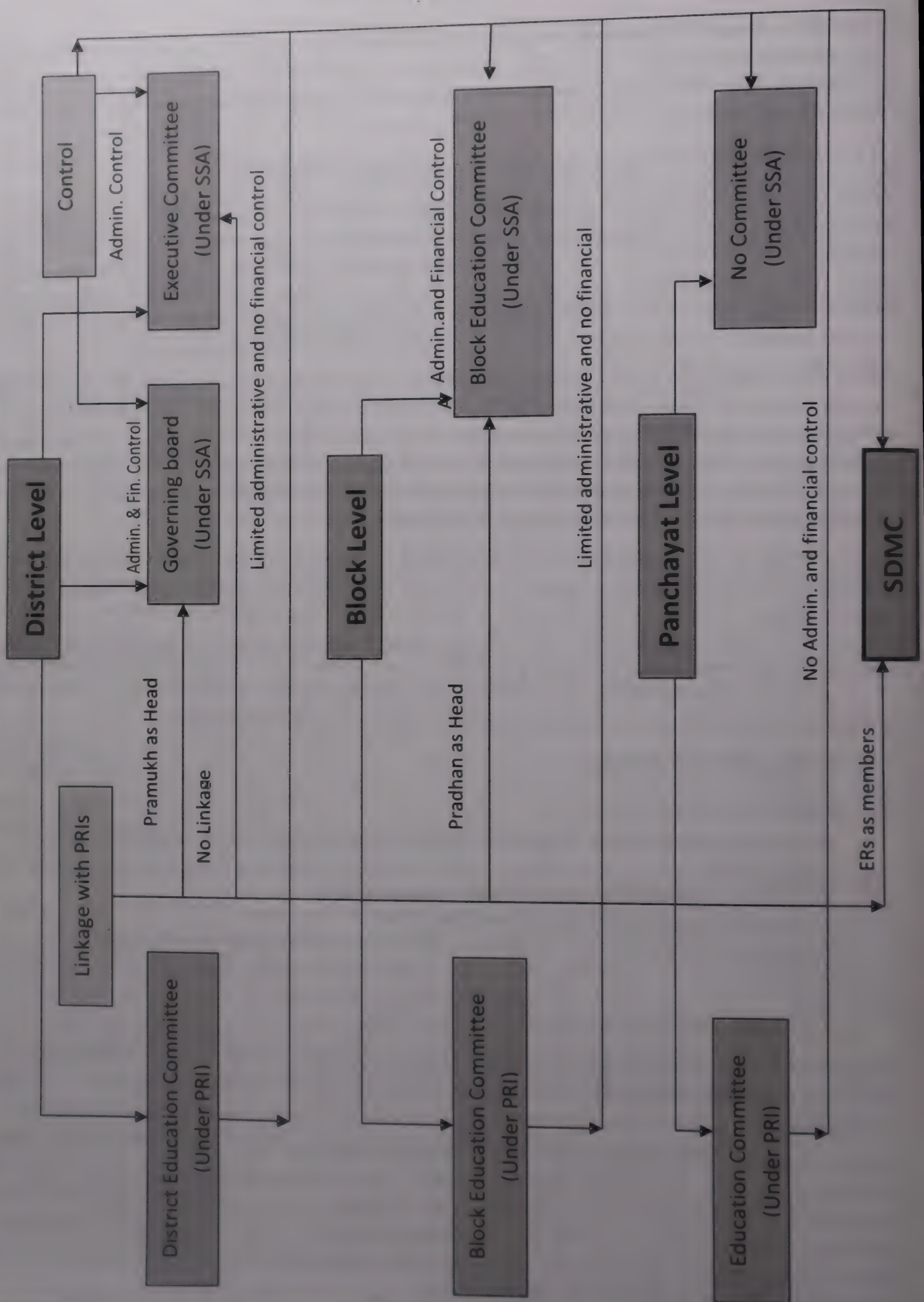
The objectives of the program are:

- All children to be in schools, Education Guarantee Scheme centres, alternate schools, back-to-school camps by 2003
- All children to complete five years of primary schooling by 2007
- All children to complete eight years of schooling by 2010
- Focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality with emphasis on education for life
- Bridge all gender and social disparities at the primary stage by 2007 and at the upper primary level by 2010
- Achieve Universal retention by 2010

In Rajasthan all these above mentioned programs are being implemented. However, it must be remembered that the literacy rate in Rajasthan (61.8%) is still lower than the national rate of (64.8%), especially women's literacy is as low as 44.34%.

In order to assess the implementation methods of the program and the role of PRI in universalizing primary education at the local level, PRIA Rajasthan Chapter's undertook a study in two districts (Jaipur and Jhunjhunan). The study also critically looked in to the financial provision and contributions of the national government and the state government for the implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan at the state, district, block and the school level. The study was conducted in the Chaksu and Govindgarh Panchayats of Jaipur and Alispur and Jhunjhunan Panchayat of Jhunjhunan districts.

Linkage of PRIs and Education Department under SSA



2.12 Financial Commitments and Actual Contribution

In the 10th Five Year Plan, for the implementation of Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, sharing of financial resources between Government of India and State Government was put at the ratio of 75:25. The finance from both the governments is then transferred to State Implementation Society (SIS), a specially created agency for the implementation of the program. The money is again transferred to state project office, which is responsible to distribute the required amount to district education officer and subsequently to the block and school level.

2.12.1 Financial contribution of Central Government (from 2001-02 to 2006-07)

The contribution made by the central Government for the program till today is presented in the following Table-2.17

Table-2.17 Central Government's Financial Contribution

(Amount in Crores)				
Year	Budget for Annual Work Plan	Committed amount from the Centre	Actual Amount Released	Actual Amount Released in %
2001-02	55.38	47.08	39.08	83.0%
2002 - 03	174.34	148.19	64.07	43.2%
2003 - 04	430.36	322.77	152.52	47.3%
2004 - 05	617.64	463.23	230.00	49.7%
2005 - 06	833.18	624.89	588.29	94.1%
2006 - 07	1235.31	926.48	721.38	77.9%
Total	3346.22	2509.66	1795.34	71.5%

Source: Rajasthan Council of Primary Education, Department Of Education Report

Data in the above table clearly shows that in the three years period from 2002- 03 to 2005- 06 Centre had released less than 50% of the amount than what was committed. Again if we compare the actual amount released with the actual amount planned for the program, it did not exceed one third of it.

2.12.2 Amount Contributed by the Rajasthan Government (2001 -02 to 2006 -07)

As per the provision, central government releases the amount first followed by the state government. Central government does not release the second grant until the state government's share is released. The centre repeats this cycle for subsequent release of grants. The year wise release of grants by the state government is shown in Table-2.18

Table-2.18 Amount released by the State Government

(Amount in Crores)

Year	Budget for Annual Work Plan	Committed amount from the State Govt.	Actual Amount Released	Actual Amount Released in %
2001-02	55.38	8.31	21.05	253.4%
2002-03	174.34	26.15	13.16	50.3%
2003-04	430.36	107.59	62.55	58.1%
2004-05	617.64	154.41	105.43	68.3%
2005-06	833.18	208.30	165.37	79.4%
2006-07(up to Jan. 07)	1235.31	308.83	240.46	77.9%
Total	3346.22	836.55	608.02	72.7%

Source: Rajasthan Council of Primary Education, Department Of Education Report

It is almost clear from the above data that the Rajasthan government has also released the committed amount in full for the implementation of the SSA program. From the year 2003-04 till January 2007 the gap between committed amount and actual amount released by the State government fall short by nearly 25% on an average per year.

Both the data shown in Table-2.10 & 2.11 shows that both the central as well as state government are not releasing the required amount for the smooth functioning of the program.

2.12.3 Receipt and Expenditure of the amount Received at the District Level

Let us then examine the amount released to the districts and actual expenses made out the amount received. Examples of only two districts (Jaipur and Jhunjhunan) are cited in the Table-2.19. Under the SSA program the state government provides grants to the districts for the purposes of construction, repair and maintenance of school buildings, teacher's assistance and purchase of teaching learning materials etc. Like wise the amount is transferred to block, panchayat and school level for different purposes.

Table-2.19 Grants released and Expenditure Made in Jaipur and Jhunjhunan Districts

(Amount in Crores)

Name of Districts	2004-05		2005-06		2006-07	
	Receipt	Expenditure	Receipt	Expenditure	Receipt	Expenditure
Jaipur	20.79	21.17	39.33	38.89	44.73	43.66
Jhunjhunan	9.64	10.94	20.65	19.16	22.21	21.03

The figures in the above table shows, that the districts are able to spend almost the entire amount for the purpose for which grants were received except in the year 2004-05. The reason for this was cited that the work permit was given much prior to the receipt of the grants. But it may be noted the amount of grants released in all the years are far below than the actual budget planned for various programs. The reason for such an anomaly is very difficult to understand. It is believed that less the amount of grants than the budgeted plan, is very likely to affect the program. One can easily wonder therefore, why this flag ship program of Government of India is still striving to attain its objectives. A comparative analysis of the grants and expenditure in the two districts may be seen in the table-2.19

In relation to the role of various committees and participation of people in SSA activities following issues emerged out of the study:

It is found that village people did not have enough knowledge about the meetings of the committees.

Since last two years the total amount (Rs.1.93 lakh) received by the schools for construction and repair work was not fully spent.

Schools were not getting the amount as per work plan prepared by them and both the Central and State governments are not releasing grants as per their commitment.

During 2006-07 grants were found to be lying with the district head quarter, which was supposed to be released to the School Development Management Committee for the purchase of teaching learning materials. The reason cited was that the required materials would be purchased from a mela to be organized by the district authorities.

During the year 2005-06 under the SSA scheme per capita expenses per student at Primary and Upper Primary level was Rs. 4669 and Rs. 3821 respectively. By any calculation the amount is no way less to attract enrolment and retention of students in the school.

At the school level no proper records of expenses made for construction and repair activities were maintained.

For the purpose of implementing SSA program properly various committees have been formed, but they hardly monitor activities and grants as required by them.

The members selected for various committees as well as elected representatives are still not meaningfully involved in the SSA program.

2.13 Conclusion

No society can claim to be developed without educating its children. Education cannot also be selective and should not cater only to the interests of few communities who are economically and socially rich. Since independence the central and federal governments have been trying to provide education to all-as enshrined in the constitution- to provide universal and compulsory education to all children below the age of 14 years. In Rajasthan one finds a plethora of schemes. The need for so many has arisen as a result of populist political necessity rather than a hard commitment to serve the purpose of educating all. Divergent schemes have brought divergent method of administrative control and management systems. These methods some times exert undue interference in the system including transfers and appointments of schoolteachers etc. Out of many other problems one most demanding issue relates to the additional demands on teachers time to perform several other functions than teaching, such as election duty, data collection during various surveys (e.g. livestock census and population census), and participation in campaigns such as pulse polio eradication.

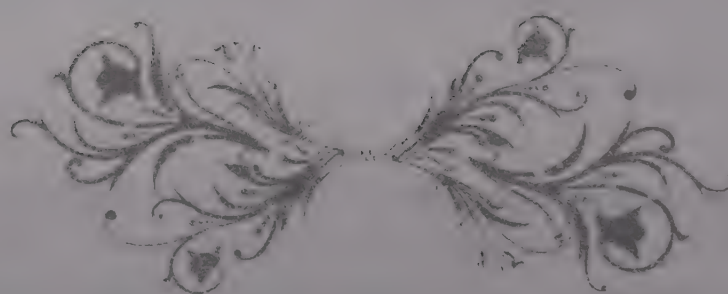
However, in Rajasthan the regular schooling system has been unable to provide primary education to the disadvantaged groups of the society, namely the scheduled tribes, scheduled castes, women and communities in remote areas. Thus, alternative systems have been devised to fill the gap. These have been successful in providing some education and some functional schools where none were there.

During all these years lot of attention have been given on the quantitative expansion of education infrastructure ignoring the quality aspects of teaching and learning. Therefore, there is an urgent need for improvement of the quality of education, given the abysmally poor levels of learning as evident in studies carried out by various agencies in the primary schools.

The administrative and institutional structure of school education has been placed directly under the purview of Panchayati Raj since 1999. The aim was to de- centralize the management and control in order to strengthen the

ability of the poor and marginal groups to participate in local governance. It was strongly felt that the participation of the people could provide the best answer to face the challenges. In reality there still exists gaps in the performance of the PRIs, because of complex set of rules and regulations thrust upon by bureaucratic system of governance. Until the local people and the local governance mechanisms are fully functional without any interference the vision of "quality education for all" will remain a distant dream. It would apt to quote here the thinking of our educational planners about the future vision of education in our country.

"India Vision 2020 Document" states that successful population policy is directly linked to successful education policy. Success in raising literacy rates and school enrolment rates, while reducing drop-out rates, especially for women, are closely correlated with the delayed onset of marriage and child birth, improved mortality for both mothers and children, and reduction in family size. In fact, a successful education policy forms the bedrock of all fields of national development—political, economic, technical, scientific, social, and environmental.



Chapter-3

Women & Girl Child in Rajasthan

3.1 Health Status of Women / Girl Children in India

A study conducted by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi in 2003 states that "In India women (15-45yrs) and children (<15 yrs) constitute 60% of the total population. They comprise the vulnerable fraction of the population due to the risks connected with child-bearing in case of women; and growth, development and survival in case of infants and children."

The study came up with much more startling facts about the health condition of the pregnant women, new born and child health situation in the country as a whole. It is stated in the report that "Each year in India, roughly 30 million women experience pregnancy and 27 million have a live birth (MOHFW, 2003c). Of these, over 100,000 maternal deaths and one million newborn deaths occur annually. Millions more suffer pregnancy related ill health. Although pregnancy-related mortality and morbidity continue to take a huge toll on the lives of women and newborns, and despite a series of programmatic initiatives, there is little evidence that maternity has become significantly safer over the last 20 years."

Analyzing the maternal mortality, the study found that "Maternal mortality rate, an important indicator of maternal health in India is estimated to be 407/100,000 live births (RGI, 1998). With an estimated 136,000 deaths, India has the highest burden of maternal mortality in the world. Forty seven percent of maternal deaths in rural India are attributed to anemia and hemorrhage, causes that are very much avoidable. Abortions are the third leading single cause of maternal mortality being responsible for 12% of the deaths."

A comparison of maternal mortality rate in the states of India revealed that, maternal mortality is low in such states as Kerala and Punjab. In as many as 10 of the 15 major states (Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) ratios exceed 400 per 100,000 live births. However, in three other states (Assam, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh) the ratio is as high as 700 or more.

3.2 Women and State of Health in Rajasthan

Women in Rajasthan, particularly in rural areas are the most deprived, downtrodden, illiterate, neglected and the weakest group of the population. They have been living in utter destitution, drudgery and stark poverty for years after years. They have been waiting for the fulfillment of their rights and basic human needs. Even after so many years of independence, things have hardly changed. With exception to the urban educated women and women who are associated with women's movements, most rural women are unaware of their rights and rotting with illiteracy, poverty, social inequality under the burden of shameful social customs, cultural taboos. Child marriages and polygamy are common in spite of legal frame works. The over all picture of women in Rajasthan most particularly in rural areas are deplorable.

In this section we are attempting to highlight on three aspects relating to the issue of women in the state. In the first part the overall health condition and health delivery services; second part covers the crude reality of female foeticide and finally the plight of widows in the state.

Government of Rajasthan prepared a Human Development Report in 2002 focusing on vital human development issues like education, health and livelihood and etc. It is a remarkable report which not only analyzed the progress but also acknowledged the areas of failure. We are here attempting to use some of that analysis to further our argument. Rajasthan Human Development Report states that "The status of health in Rajasthan, despite progress made since 1949, is quite poor both in absolute and relative terms. The health targets set at Alma Ata have not

been realized fully in the year 2000. Primary health care has not reached a large number of poor people, especially women, dalits, and communities living in remote areas. Under the "Minimum Needs Programme" and affiliated schemes, rural health infrastructure has also been built up. However, the health scenario in Rajasthan is still characterized by gender imbalance, low vital rates (lower than the ones for the nation) and an uneven health care coverage.

The Report further states that "An appraisal of the current health situation and the disease profile of Rajasthan vis-à-vis goals of universal health care shows that there are substantial shortfalls in the efficacy of the public health system in the state. In the early 1950s, the health profile of Rajasthan compared favourably with that of other Indian states, and with the national average. Today, Rajasthan's health indicators are among the poorest in the country, indicating that the state's performance in terms of improvement in vital statistics and case fatality from various diseases has been comparatively lackluster".

Rajasthan is a typical Indian state where strong socio-cultural norms play a very significant role in the development perspective of the state. Much of the ill health condition of the people in general and women/girl child in particular can be strongly correlated to certain social variables such as patriarchal family life, where gender discrimination is rampant. In such a condition, expectant mothers and girl children are generally found to be neglected and women are mostly vulnerable to diseases. Indicators such as life expectancy, infant and child mortality, fertility and other vital rates, as well as of the state's disease profile clearly manifest the vulnerability status of women.

The Alma Ata Declaration of "Health for All by the Year 2000" was the outcome of Global Conference on Health, held in 1978 at Alma Ata, sponsored by the World Health Organization (WHO) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Primary health care was defined in the Alma Ata Declaration as "essential health care based on practical, scientifically sound and socially acceptable methods and technology made universally accessible to individuals and families in the community through their full participation and at a cost that the community and the country can afford to maintain at every stage of their development."

During the 1970s it was felt that the country's health strategy needed to be defined through a policy statement. This led to the formulation of the National Health Policy by the Government of India in 1982. The aim was to achieve "Health for All" by 2000, in accordance with the Alma Ata Declaration of 1978. The National Health Policy reached out to the marginalized communities and groups who were not benefiting from the formal system of health care, improved living conditions that affected health, and transferred control of health services to the communities. Rajasthan adopted the National Health Policy in 1983 and undertook the task of operationalising primary health care in the entire state. The current priorities and focus of the state can be ascertained from the following excerpts from the "Approach to the Ninth Five Year Plan 1997-2002", of the State Government.

In the Ninth Plan, the thrust was on preventive and promotional services, along with health education to the people. The emphasis has to be on:

- Correcting the imbalance
- Improving delivery of services by up gradation of physical facilities, manpower, equipment, etc.
- Decentralized approach for planning and implementation of the family welfare programme should be continued with greater vigour.
- With the thrust on basic health services or primary health care and on rural areas, the secondary level institutions have not received due attention. All district and sub-divisional level hospitals should be developed so as to provide proper referral and clinical care.

- Human resource development has been a neglected area, especially for field staff and para- workers. Manpower development and management policy should be concretized to lay down the roles and responsibilities, accountability, up gradation of skills, better management and supervision.
- A holistic view of reproductive health should be taken, incorporating the perspective of women's health. There is need to reorganize and restructure family welfare services to help women to raise their health and social status.
- The cost of health care is very high due to advances in medical sciences and technology and rising cost structure. Possibility of involvement of private sector should be explored and encouraged for providing specialty and diagnostic services.
- A sense of commitment and performance has to be generated among the medical and health personnel, so as to improve the delivery of services."

The vision of health for all in Rajasthan, as laid out in the Ninth Plan Approach paper, is based upon an appreciation of the need for reforming health services in the state, consistent with the Health Policy Statement of 1982. The provisioning of health services has to be evaluated in the light of this policy commitment.

3.3 The paradox of Increasing Economic Development & Declining Sex ratio in Rajasthan


Rajasthan has a sex ratio of 922 (According to the 2001 Census). Within the state, Dungarpur shows the highest ratio (1027) and Jaisalmer the lowest (821). Rajendra Bouda in Dainik Bhaskar, May 2007 issue wrote that, out of 32 districts in Rajasthan, in 21 districts during the period between 1991 and 2001 census, there has been constant decline in sex ratio. In Ganganagar district, where economic development has taken place due to canal irrigation, there the sex ratio has declined by 42 per thousand boys. Similarly Jhunjhunun where each family has given at least one soldier to the Army, there the sex ratio has declined by 33 per thousand male. Surprisingly in Jaipur, the capital city of the state the sex ratio is down by 28. During the last hundred years (since the 1901 Census) Rajasthan has continued to record a lower sex ratio than that of India.

In spite of the improvements in the last few decades in the health delivery methods, there still exist major differences in male- female health indicators. Women's lives are more at risk in terms of persistent ill-health and death. Most of the health problems among girl children begins in the childhood and continues through adolescence and reproductive years of adulthood. "In the state young girls enter the reproductive phase of their lives as victims of under-nourishment, anemia and fatigue. Their health risks increase with early marriages, frequent pregnancies, unsafe abortions and sexually transmitted diseases. Choices regarding marriage, childbearing and contraception are denied to women. Lack of access to functional reproductive health services contributes to high maternal mortality. Most deliveries are still carried out by untrained birth attendants especially in the rural areas where there is no effective system of referral or management in case complications arise. Though there has been widespread increase of infrastructure services in the state during the past decades, access to these facilities is still varied resulting in very slow change in the mortality rates."

आधुनिक तकनीक यदि कन्याभूषण हत्या का कारण बने तो इससे अधिक शर्म की बात क्या हो सकती है।

संज्ञा

[illegible]

कुल 32 जमानों में ये 21 वं इन हम
क्योंकि ये भद्रादौ के प्रथमका (मनुष्य)
को संभार कम हो। यह प्रथम विमान
ये सात खड़ी करीब से सप्तमका बाहर है। यही
उत्तर 42 मनुष्योंको भी समझ रहा है।  यही का क
ये 32 जमानों में ये 21 वं इन हम
उत्तर 42 मनुष्योंको भी समझ रहा है। यही का क
उत्तर 42 मनुष्योंको भी समझ रहा है। यही का क

यह है वहाँ से मुकाम में वेन तकनीक की मदद मिलती है।
 वह कम्पन जर्मनीएर लक्ष्य वह बने कि वह बात अलग हो गई
 कि से-विकास में माली के दुपयोजन क्षेत्र में प्रत्यक्ष गैर बने
 का निम्न चरण के निम्न हो रहा है और उस परिणाम में वह
 वह बनने पर कि वह लक्ष्य है कि वे पर्यटन पर निम्न चल
 है, वहाँ दुपयोजन का कि कि कम्पन लक्ष्य होने के इतने नहीं
 वह उभार हो चला। कि कम्पन लक्ष्य लक्ष्य लक्ष्य है।

आमूरा के प्रसिद्ध चित्रकारों में मुहम्मद अली की चर्चनीयताओं का सम्बन्ध उनकी चर्चनीयताओं से है। मुहम्मद अली की चर्चनीयताओं का सम्बन्ध उनकी चर्चनीयताओं से है। मुहम्मद अली की चर्चनीयताओं का सम्बन्ध उनकी चर्चनीयताओं से है।

अपने-अपने कि समुद्र तट बहुत बहुरंग
है जो किनारे का समुद्रमाछों को पूरी
तकलीफ देता है कि जिससे वह अपने जिले
में मुक्ति निकलकर निजान समुद्र में जा
सकता है कबू का जो जल भी पृथ
प्रोक्त का काम छोटे छिपे काले है।
जब भी जल समुद्र आता कि कई
निकलकर निजान के काले काले इक
कलकल का काले है कि उनको एक
मोती-मोती मरीन का प्रोक्तका स्ट

[illegible]

अन्यथा ये वा वाच भी मयने आं हि विम हवाम
हवाम वा सर्वे ननुम भी दुस सर्वेनभी ये वाचुं के विमननयन
ये विमनं वचामः । हा विमने ये भीमपरादो ने वा
अन्यथाये हे ही विमने वाचुननुम वचामः । परम मयने मय
एव । मयननयन मयिनी वा भी प्रवचनः । विमने सर्वे मयन
के मने ये वाचुं सर्वे जितो ये ये मयिनीव विमने मयिनीव
नो वाचुं पृष्ठं । सर्वेके मयनन भी मयने ये मने मयिनीव
विमने मने वाचुं मयिनीव मयनने के मयने पर विमनन नो
मयनः ।



Describing the status of Reproductive Health of women in the state, the report presents an abysmal picture. It is stated that, "Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and its functions and processes. The level of awareness of women regarding reproductive health and problems related to it continues to be abysmally low in Rajasthan. In spite of the 'high priority' immunization programme, which includes awareness building, according to estimates from the NSS 52nd Round, in 1996 only half of rural women were aware of the need for immunization during pregnancy (tetanus vaccination). In terms of actually receiving anti-tetanus vaccination, nearly two thirds of pregnant rural women and 60 percent of all pregnant women were not vaccinated." (Rajasthan Human Development Report, 2002)

Pre-natal medical care is a major constituent of reproductive health system, as it is critical for health of the mother and the new born child. In case of Rajasthan it is found that only 11 percent of all pregnant women aged 15-49 years in rural and 35 percent in urban areas actually sought pre-natal care as a "routine" care. Again out of 11 percent only 10 percent of all rural pregnant women were influenced by the trained ANMs to seek antenatal care.

The above figure speaks volumes about the health care coverage and its benefit on the health status of women in the state. If this was the situation in 2002, one can well imagine

the quality and quantity of improvements as of today. As the availability and accessibility of medical services has tremendously increased in the state, it is hoped that the figures have been pushed up in the recent years to nullify the persistent poor health outcomes.

This was front page news in the leading English daily, the Times of India, September 10, 2007. The statistics revealed in the Mortality Statistics of 2006 released by the Bureau of Health Intelligence of the Ministry of Health, government of India, states that nearly half (49.4%) of all female deaths in rural Rajasthan are of girls below the age of 20. An anguished reporter writes that, "Out of these 42% are the girls who have not celebrated their fifth birth day. In short, a girl born in a Rajasthan village will have to very lucky to grow up, marry and bear children- things that are taken fairly granted in the modern world".

Rajasthan is alone in this pathetic state of affairs. The situation is virtually same in the states of UP, Bihar, MP, and Chattisgarh. But is it any consolation. Should the State compete with other backward states and for wrong reasons? Is the government of the day taking note of this fact? This clearly means effort by the government is making any dent into the deep rooted prejudices and attitude towards the girl children in the State. In addition to the abysmal health condition of the women, in Rajasthan there is a serious concern about the increasing number of female foeticide.

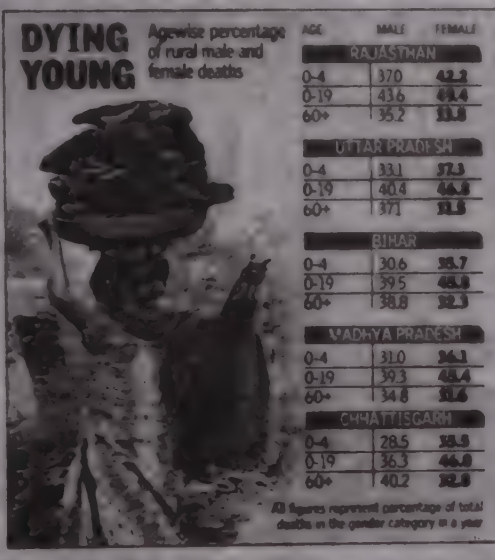
3.5 The shame and saga of Female Foeticide in Rajasthan

Female foeticide in India is not only confined to Rajasthan but also many parts of the country. But what is alarming is the fact that along with female feticide, Rajasthan also tops in perpetuating the most shame full practice of SATI in the state.

In Rajasthan, death prefers young girls

Half Of All Female Deaths Are Of Those Below 20

Rama Nagarajan
TIMES INSIGHT GROUP



New Delhi: Nearly half of all female deaths in rural Rajasthan are of girls below the age of 20. The precise figure is 49.4%. Out of these, 42% of the deaths are of girls who haven't yet celebrated their fifth birthday. In short, a girl born in a Rajasthan village will have to be very lucky to grow up, marry, bear children — things that are taken fairly for granted in the modern world.

The shocking news doesn't end here. What's worse is that the situation is virtually the same for girls in most Hindi heartland states, including Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh. In UP, for instance, nearly half the female deaths in a year — 47% — to be precise — are of girls below 20 years. Bulk of these deaths are in rural areas.

The bias against females is also related to the fact that "sons are looked at as a type of insurance. Even our religions have been prejudiced towards women. According to Manu, a woman has to be reborn as a man to attain moksha (redemption). A man cannot attain moksha unless he has a son to light his funeral pyre. Also, it says a woman who gives birth to only daughters may be left in the eleventh year of marriage. It is a common saying in India, Ladka marey kambakth ka; Ladki marey bhaagwaan ki ("It's a fool who loses his male child and the fortunate one who loses a girl child"). Obviously, it shows the gender bias in our male-dominated, patriarchal society." (Pande & Malhotra, 2006)

Current research in India shows that better educated women from urban, wealthy environments are most likely to practice sex-selective abortion due to son preferences, as the uneducated and having lesser access to means tend to opt for female foeticide due to plethora of social pressures. In addition, availability of low cost technology like ultra sound and the ever willing hands of unscrupulous medical practitioners have helped in increasing the rate of female foeticide resulting

in fewer girl children born each year. It is no surprising, therefore, that the census figures depict the story of lesser girl children than boys in the state.

Box-3.1

What is female foeticide?

Female foeticide is a practice of selective elimination of the female foetus after prenatal sex determination or sex pre-selection, thus avoiding the birth of a girl child. Essentially, female foeticide is a two-step practice. The first step involves the detection of the sex of the unborn baby in the womb of the mother. This could be done at the behest of the mother, or father, or both or under family pressure. Sex of the baby could be detected through pre-conception and post-conception methods. The pre-conception methods include ericsson method (X and Y chromosome separation) and pre-implantation genetic diagnosis. However, it is the post-conception methods that are in much wider use, namely: amniocentesis, chronic villus sampling and ultrasonography. Once the sex of the baby is detected, the second step involves a decision taken by the mother, or father, or both or under pressure from the family to have or not have the child.

Source: Female Infanticide and Feticide: The Declining Sex Ratio, Ranjana Kumari, Centre for Social Research, New Delhi, 2006

Chetan Sharma and Divya Jain in an article entitled "Technology and its Impact on female foeticide in India", wrote that "In India, the practice of sex-selective abortion or female foeticide (in which an unborn baby is aborted or killed before birth simply because it is not a boy) is only the latest manifestation of a long history of gender bias, evident in the historically low and declining population ratio of women to men. Moreover, the medical fraternity in India has been quick to see entrepreneurial opportunities in catering to the insatiable demand for a male child. Until recently, the technology was prohibitively expensive." (Sharma & Jain, 2005) Please read a true episode in See Box-3.2

A True Story

In Rajasthan's violent desert culture, baby girls were drowned in boiling milk or abandoned in a sand dune. Whole villages went decades without female children. "Some in today's India decided to expose the abortion atrocity. They masterminded an ingenious plan to film those in the medical "profession" breaking the law by killing female unborn.

"The video shows the doctor laughing as she levels a fee of 2,000 rupees (about \$44) to abort a child in the seventh month of pregnancy," per The Washington Times' Julia Duin.

It's illegal but done daily in India. After all, females are not considered important, as in Islam and throughout China. "In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent." -- Verse 5:148 in the Hindu laws of Manu

"Meena Sharma, a 26-year-old freelance reporter, knew there were massive violations of government law forbidding doctors from telling pregnant women the sex of their unborn children and using abortion to eliminate unwanted girls.

"She approached Shripal Shaktawat, Jaipur bureau chief of the Sahara Samay TV network, with an idea he could not refuse. What if she lined up several pregnant women with TV cameras hidden in their purses who would say their foetus was a girl and they wanted an abortion? Miss Sharma would go along, playing the part of the woman's aunt or mother-in-law.

"It was an emotional issue for me," said the reporter, who remembers as a 14-year-old seeing one of her pregnant aunts being instructed by a physician to abort the female foetus.

"In nine episodes from April 4 to June 13, the TV network aired a 12-hour series, 'Murder in the Womb.' It was based on undercover visits to 140 health clinics in 36 cities in four Indian states. Doctors in 100 clinics either agreed to do a sex-determination test and abortion or gave referrals to other doctors who would. Both actions are illegal.

"Mr. Shaktawat, who posed as a husband, and his "wife" would tell doctors they already had daughters and had no wish to birth any more.

"Now the baby has grown bigger and it will come out alive," Dr. Nidhi Malhotra from the city of Chittorgarh in south Rajasthan is shown saying in Hindi on the hidden video. 'Will you kill it?'"

One of the gross evils plaguing world society is murdering womb babies, particularly unwanted females. In China the custom has gone so far as to make it practically impossible for males to find wives. The imbalance is not of God but sinful mortals.

"It had taken Miss Sharma a year to compile the devastating report, which showed doctor after doctor on camera illegally urging the women -- all of whom were at least in their fifth month or more -- to abort their female offspring. Abortion is illegal in India after the 20th week unless there are threats to the mother's health. "The documentaries shamed the region's most prominent doctors. A group of physicians offered the station \$34 million to cancel the series.

"On April 14, the government filed charges against 21 Rajasthan doctors in the series- but did not prosecute them. "The Rajasthan Medical Council suspended the licenses of seven- but allowed them to continue practicing.

"Then in the early morning hours of April 18, a group of six men threw stones and broke windows at Mr. Shaktawat's home. He was away in New Delhi, but his family was told worse would happen to them if the series was not stopped."

Source: J. Grant Swank, Jr., HINDU INDIA ABORTS FEMALES ILLEGALLY

For every body's understanding about the type of diagnostics, they further elaborated that, "the three chief pre-natal diagnostic tests that are being used to determine the sex of a foetus are amniocentesis, chronic villi biopsy (CVB) and ultrasonography. Amniocentesis is meant to be used in high-risk pregnancies, in women over 35 years. CVB is meant to diagnose inherited diseases like thalassaemia, cystic fibrosis and muscular dystrophy. Ultrasonography is the most commonly used technique. It is non-invasive and can identify up to 50 per cent of abnormalities related to the central nervous system of the foetus. But sexing has become its preferred application."

3.6 Law and Female Foeticide

Realising the potential threat of such a technology, National Government had banned all types of pre-natal sex determination for the purpose of abortion and made it a penal offence. But most interestingly, defying the ban there have been rampant commercialization of the technology. Almost all of us will agree with Sharma and Jain who candidly put the state of affair as, "Private clinics providing sex determination tests through amniocentesis multiplied rapidly and widely. These tests are made available in areas that do not even have potable water, with marginal farmers willing to take loans at 25 per cent interest to have the test. Advertisements appear blatantly encouraging people to abort their female foetuses in order to save the future cost of dowry. The portable ultrasound machine has allowed doctors to go from house to house in towns and villages. In a democracy it is difficult to restrict right to business and livelihood if the usual parameters are fulfilled." (Sharma & Jain, 2005)

There is a complicity of law regarding abortion and foeticide. While abortion (Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act -1971) has been allowed on broad medical and social grounds, The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act and Rules 1994 (PCPNDT) mandates that sex selection by any person, by any means, before or after conception, is prohibited. "The Act seeks to regulate and prevent misuse of pre-natal diagnostic techniques, but due to the ambiguities it is difficult to regulate them either. The PNDT Act allows pre-natal diagnosis only for chromosomal abnormalities, genetic metabolic disorders and congenital abnormalities. The law however permits ultrasound clinics, clinics for medical termination of pregnancies and assisted reproductive facilities as a routine matter and as a legitimate business."

It is startling to note that even many doctors ignore the legally binding Code of Medical Ethics, in terms of Medical Council Act, 1956 passed by the Indian Parliament. Under this provision, Doctors are legally bound to report about the malpractice. "As per PCPNDT Act., it is also a mandatory requirement by the person conducting ultrasonography or any other pre-natal diagnostic technique to maintain proper records. The Act requires the filling up of a written form, duly signed by the expectant mother, as to why she has sought diagnosis. Violations are punishable by imprisonment and a fine. The law also permits abortions for failure of contraception. It is a huge challenge for the government to detect violations of the PNDT Act, since it is a crime of collusion and by consensus." (Sharma & Jain, 2005)

Not only the Pre-natal sex determination is banned, even there are provisions in the Indian Penal Code such as, a) Foeticide (Sections 315 and 316 b) Infanticide (Section 315). This means there are strict laws to punish offences committed by the actors. However, the ground reality is totally different because of utter disregard to the laws.

According to Sharma and Jain, "Doctors in India believe 2 million foetuses are killed every year through abortion, simply because they are female, even though it is an illegal practice. And with the increasing availability of sex determination tests it is impossible to keep track of such cases. There is little doubt that in India the Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act 1994 has not been very effective. The facts revealed by the census speak for themselves. We need, rather, to attempt more broad-reaching strategies that will address the economic and cultural roots of the problem."

3.7 The Plight of Widows in Rajasthan

In India volumes have been written on the gender issues and the status of women in various contexts. But very few have actually looked into the issue of widows and their plight. In a recently concluded study entitled 'Destitution of Widows in Rajasthan', Subrata Dutta of Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre (BARC), Jaipur, has brought out startling revelation about a subject which our readers may be enthusiastic to learn more. This is remarkable field based study done in 22 Blocks of 8 districts by a randomly selected sample size.

With due acknowledgement to the author and the Institution, we are tempted to use the study in this report to make our readers aware of about the life and living of thousand of widows in our society and what role the government as an institution of support has been doing.

Objectives of the study was to assess how far the social security by way of widow pension and BPL facilities have been able to reach the vulnerable widows, by making a quantitative analysis of primary data collected through field survey.

The numbers of women in Rajasthan as per 2001 Census of India was 2,70,87,177 and number of widows are 15,89,726, that is 5.87 percent of the total female population of the state. In other words widows constitute 2.8 percent of the total population of the state. Of the total number of widows, 12,44,074 live in rural areas and 3,45,652 live in urban areas. This means almost 80 percent widows live in rural areas. With the increase in population, the absolute number of widows has been continuously increasing in the state over the years (from 9,13,112 in 1961 to 15,89,726 in 2001).

It is common knowledge that widows in India live a life full of social stigma attached to their role and responsibility in the family. Ahuja in his study in 1996 narrates that the social involvement of widows in social roles and relationship is dependent less on their own initiative and self-confidence but more on the will of heads of families and social pressures. Traditional culture discourages widows from taking to assertive social engagements outside the home and related interactions. Widows are dependent upon traditional support networks, i.e. on in-laws and parents in young and middle age and sons in late middle and old age for social, emotional and economic supports.

As has been mentioned that it is very common knowledge that in the traditional Indian families women face lot of crisis and tremendous hardship after the death of the husband. More than anything else the economic needs of a widow is more acute if the family does not have enough land or monetary resources available, which the widow can make use of for a living and bringing up children in a respectful manner. But in majority of cases, widows generally do not have any assured economic source for living. Apart from selling her labour, she needs support from various sources including the government.

Of late many states have provided different pension schemes for the widows. The schemes have attracted lot of criticisms from social activists and scholars because of the process and the quantum of assistance. In Rajasthan the scheme started in 1974. Under the provision in the scheme an eligible widow is entitled for Rs. 200 per month. The additional ration of 10 kg of wheat free of cost per month was abandoned due to lack of interdepartmental coordination. So from 2006 -07 Rs. 50 was increased in the pension. The eligibility criteria are that the widow should not have more than 11 bigha of un-irrigated land or 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ bigha of irrigated land and she should not have son/s of more than 18 years old. The second criteria are not only absurd but also extremely illogical. It ignores a fact that son or sons may not get suitable employment and may also find difficult to manage the economic burden of the family.

The findings of the study are presented below:

The Age of Widows- About 86.5 percent of the widows were found to be in the most vulnerable age group of 30 to 60 years. In second group about 8.5 percent were in the age group of 70 to 90 years and 5 percent belong to the very young age of 20 years or so.

Employment status of widows - Although some widows were engaged in wage employment in unskilled work, about 49 percent widows in the age group of above 40s did not have any possibility of being hired as wage labourers involving heavy work. What was revealed in the study that the share of wage earners decreases with age and the share of unemployment of widows increases with age?

Employment Status of Widows

1. 36 percent widows were unemployed
2. 48 percent widows earned their livelihood from unskilled, casual, painstaking heavy work.
3. 11.5 percent widows find work for 21 - 30 days in a month
4. 25.5 percent widows find work for 11 - 20 days in a month.
5. 17.5 percent widows find work for less than 10 days in a month
6. 10 percent widows get lowest wage of Rs.10 - 20 per day.
7. 16 percent widows receive only Rs.21 - 30 per day
8. Only 31 percent widows receive wage of Rs 30 or more per day.

Regarding the number of days of work available per month for those who were engaged in casual labour, the study found that only 11.5 percent of widows were able to find work for 21-30 days in a month, out of which 6 percent were engaged in formal employment and 5.5 percent in informal sector. 25.5 percent found work for 11- 20 days in a month and 17.5 percent found work for 1- 10 days in a month. The study concluded from the over all data that a large number of widows in Rajasthan are living in vulnerable condition since most of them are under the threat of economic insecurity, as wage employment is not available for 30 days in a month.

As regards wage earning, 10 percent receive the lowest wage of Rs.10 -20 per day and 16 percent receive only Rs.21 - 30 per day. Only 31 percent widows found to be receiving wages of Rs.30 or higher than that. The amount of wages as found to be received by the widows for their labour is not only too meager to manage any kind of decent life but also gross violation of government approved wage rates.

Housing- The study found that 7.5 percent widows live in rented houses and another 7.5 percent were living with their relations. About 84.5 percent widows had their own houses of which majority 52.5 percent had only kutcha houses.

Most interestingly, government has a scheme called "Indira Awas Yojana", a centrally sponsored scheme (75 percent contributed by Central Government and 25 percent by State Govt.), whose primary objective were to strengthen the condition of women in society. But surprisingly 95 percent widows did not know about the scheme at all. This shows the apathy of the government and casual attitude of the bureaucracy who are responsible for implementing the scheme and the interest level of elected representatives towards their people's miseries.

Inclusion of Vulnerable widows in BPL or Pension Scheme - The study found that about 35.5 percent widows included in BPL category, of which 50 percent were not receiving any widow pension. Similarly of the 64.5 percent non BPL widows 72 percent were out of pension scheme. The vulnerability condition of the non BPL widows stems from the fact that many of them were landless. The data found that as many as 78 percent non BPL widows did not have any land or were un-irrigated and in the possession of others.

It is important to note here that surprisingly, "large number of landless widows were not included in BPL category. Since landlessness is a key indicator of vulnerability, most of the widows if not all, deserve to be included in the BPL category. Their inclusion in BPL category is important because, each BPL cardholder in Rajasthan is eligible to

receive a number of public facilities either at subsidized rate or free of cost." Given the financial condition and hardship of the widows, this facility is a source of great relief and denial of the facility amounts to denial of justice to the widows.

Benefit of the Widow Pension Scheme - The data pertaining to widows receiving pension presents a sordid picture about the actual position about the pattern of pension. Most surprisingly, the more the age of the widows, less number are benefiting from the scheme. According to the data, about 93 percent widows did not receive any pension. Similarly 80 percent in the age group of 60 years, 70 percent in the group of 50 years, 62 percent in the age group of 40 years and 60 percent in the age of 20 years did not receive any pension.

The data presents a very contrasting situation. The most young and the aged widows did not get the benefit of the pension scheme. It may be due to the reason that while the young widows did not have access to the schemes due to social taboos, the aged ones failed to benefit as they also lack the access. With the increase in age widow become more vulnerable and most likely require the support more than any body. But ironically, the data reveals the real picture about the plight of widows. Some widows may not need the pension, but those who do not have any land nor do reliable sources to bank upon for their living definitely need the government support. It seems age, illiteracy and lack of support from desired sources; deprive the widows to benefit from the scheme. This raises a number of questions about the role of panchayats, bureaucracy responsible for implementing welfare schemes and the attitude of nearest relatives.

3.8 Widow Pension Scheme, for whose benefit is it?

If government provides a budget for mere 2 lakh widows, then what happens to other 14 lakh widows? What is rationale of such budgetary provisions, when majority of them not only are land less and many of them do not have reliable source to depend upon for their living? It is therefore, no surprising that many of them are living in destitute condition.

The study aptly concludes that "Most of the widows are suffering from lack of basic needs and a large proportion of widows are living outside of the safety net. State support through social securities might improve their quality of life. For them state support is essential since due to lack of skill most of them are unable to find gainful employment. They also need to be provided with education and training, but initially what they urgently need is basic support for the sake of their survival as well as dignity. The widow pension of Rs.250 per month is too little to meet the basic needs. This amount needs to be enhanced, and the same time a much greater number of widows need to be covered with the safety net of social security. Providing the widows only with BPL card will not simply improve their condition since several BPL facilities are not available at free of cost. They need both the BPL facilities and the widow pension, among others." (Dutta, 2007)



Chapter-4

Dalits in Rajasthan

4.1 Years of discrimination-When is it going to end?

Rajasthan is the second largest atrocity prone state in India. According to Census 2001, the population of Rajasthan state is 5,65,07,188 and dalits constitute 17.16 % (7097706). Rajasthan retains much of its feudal and caste ridden nature of society, characterized by social exclusion, everyday humiliation, discrimination, untouchability and other human rights violations against its dalit people. Dalits own marginal or very small pieces of agriculture land. The feudal mindset prohibits dalit access to public services and places and limits their participation in democratic institutions. Dalits live a life of extreme dependency on dominant caste communities for their livelihood, maintain a culture of silence against untouchability and discrimination, have very little space in democratically built institutions and are caught up in the unequal and inhuman system. They live a life of extreme poverty and lack basic amenities like food, water etc. Although laws exist for securing their rights, unawareness about them, lack of resources and courage to fight for the rights make them silent, compliant and even more vulnerable. The administration, police and politicians, most of the time subscribing to the caste values and biases do not uphold Constitutional provisions and legislations in ensuring fairness, equality or prescribed protection to dalit communities.

The Dalits are facing denial of rights on the basis of caste. Situation of the dalit communities continues to suffer from the practice of untouchability and deliberate segregation. This practice of untouchability is hidden and insidious as well as blatantly open as in the case of segregated all levels. This has severe implications for dalits more specifically in terms of their access to livelihoods, food sources, water and sanitation facilities and state welfare programmes. Government functionaries are reluctant to provide mandatory services for health, nutrition, and other such basic services in these localities. Hence, while on the one hand dalits are dealing with poverty and survival issues and on the other they are not receiving the basic services which could have alleviated some of their daily life problems like collecting water, bad sanitary conditions, sending children to school in unsafe conditions and lack of alternative work opportunities for additional income generation.

4.2 Livelihood

Livelihood is intimately connected to the right to work. The human right to work is essential for realizing other human rights and forms an inseparable and inherent part of human dignity. The right to work contributes on the one hand to the survival of the individual and to that of his/her family, and insofar as work is freely chosen or accepted, to his/her development and recognition within the community. On the other hand it should ensure a life free from exploitation to a life of freedom and dignity. This is possible for dalits only when there are conditions that ensure their participation and self development, which is having easy access to quality education, training and other resources like credit, land and such others. However the findings from this fact finding process has shown that dalit women have been deliberately kept at the fringes of society and denied all access to any such resources. The State has played a critical role in this denial of rights by making no effort to protect, promote or fulfill these despite being signatories to National and International Laws and Covenants. A closer examination of the status of this right of dalit women shows the following:

4.2.1 Availability

Availability of work within the villages has become a distant dream for most of the dalit families. Those who worked on land as agricultural labour have been facing a crisis because of lack of work due to acute shortage of rainfall in Rajasthan over the past 3 to 4 years. Besides we did not find any State sponsored employment schemes or any State assistance which are mandatory in times of such natural disasters. Therefore, families have not been

able to identify and find alternative employment. With the result that the situation of dalit women is worsen off. Their opportunities to get paid work even if they want to work are miniscule.

- Most women would like to do some sort of paid work. Dalits have wishes to work in the day when they are free to supplement the family income but being constrained by non-availability of such options.
- The nature of employment that is assigned to them and the conditions within which they work in are inhumane and derogatory.
- Several dalits migrate along with families to Haryana and other States for short durations. Here they are not governed by any labour laws and have no negotiating platforms for adequate working conditions. Since they belong to the unorganized sector monitoring mechanisms for national laws are inadequate and fail to protect them. Hence the employment conditions are bad and they often work only for grain or food.
- As already mentioned wages paid to women are neither equal to what men are paid nor are they adequate.
- Due to patriarchal perceptions and constructions of work, women's work and contribution is unseen and therefore unremunerated. This is apparent at family levels wherein in traditional occupations like shoe making, women assisted in sewing the soles, polishing the shoes and other inhumane work etc and yet were not seen as contributing economically to the family incomes. The dalits did not have any access to the income generated through this work nor any control over its expenditure. In fact they were completely and totally dependent on their husbands.
- We did not find a single State sponsored scheme being implemented for training or giving credit access to dalits. Though in some of the areas there are NGOs but very few focus on income generating activities and mobilization of women into Self Help Groups.
- The economic status of dalit women are the same in both rural and urban areas. If it is cleaning cattle pens in the villages then it is piece rate work in urban areas where extreme poverty and lack of awareness prevents them from demanding adequate remuneration for their work.
- Government jobs are far and few and with little access to education and training they are unable to enter the formal organized work sector.
- In the end therefore dalits have to migrate for work and work in conditions that are no where near "decent standards of employment". There is no state protection and often exploitative. Physical security of dalits also stand threatened, considering that there is an inherent cultural caste driven mindset that dalits are "easy" and "available".

4.2.2 Access to land resources

The dalit community as a whole has very limited access and ownership over land. If they do, then they own only very small plots of 1 to 4 bighas which considering Rajasthan's climate (drought prone) may not be sustainable. With inadequate access to credit, seeds and other farm inputs dalits often get into debt by mortgaging these lands to upper castes. Gradually these lands are then grabbed by them and the dalits are forcibly evicted even from homesteads. Many cases of land grabbing have been recorded by CDR particularly in Rajasthan. In such a situation dalit's right to land is virtually unheard of, sanctioned neither culturally nor legally.

4.2.3 Access to credit

To ensure livelihoods it is necessary that dalits have access to credit. On the one hand very few dalit men own land or other productive assets which are a necessary corollary to qualify for credit. On the other hand since women are not considered as productive and do not own land they have no access to credit to buy agricultural implements, pump sets and minor irrigations. Having problems in accessing credit women find it even more difficult to be self employed which gets aggravated due to lack of skills or training. Clearly dalit women do not have access to

information and at the same time there is a considerable lack of transparency and corruption at the levels of Government officials.

4.2.4 Conditions of work

Labour laws and regulation of employment conditions are completely absent.

- As mentioned earlier there is evidence of bonded labour.
- Payment is made in kind instead of cash and there are no Trade Unions or Workers groups to promote the voices of dalit workers.

4.2.5 Education, technical and vocational training

- Despite specific targeted scholarship schemes for dalit children and more so for dalit girl children, dalit families lack knowledge about these like as in Maleksh work. Even if some of them are aware and apply for them they have to deal with the lackadaisical approach and bureaucratic indifference of officials. This is combined with delayed disbursement of funds from the State education department; by this time dalit children and especially girls may have dropped out of school as the process of getting the scholarships would be proving to be more expensive than the actual scholarship amount.
- We did not come across a single case where a dalit, especially dalit women had received any technical training.

4.2.6 Lack of information and transparency

There is complete lack of information about State programmes and schemes and entitlements for dalits under them like scholarships. Since there is a lack of awareness and no effort has been made by the State officials to create this awareness hence dalit men and women are unable to access these sources. This has also led to a lack of accountability and sense of complacency on part of the government. There are no shops for even general provisions within the community; dalit families do not have enough money.

To take steps towards full realization- States parties have a constant and continuing duty to measure the levels of realization against available resources at the national level and move as expeditiously and effectively as possible towards the full realization of every human right. This includes specific obligations which are:

- The obligation to respect requires States to refrain from interfering directly or indirectly with the enjoyment of human rights.
- The obligation to protect requires States to take measures that prevent third parties from interfering in any way with the enjoyment of human rights.
- The obligation to fulfill requires States to adopt appropriate legislative, administrative, budgetary, judicial, promotional and other measures towards the full realization of all human rights. The obligation to fulfill can be disaggregated into the obligations to facilitate, promote and provide. The obligation to facilitate requires the State to take positive measures to assist individuals and communities to enjoy the right.

4.2.7 Acceptability and quality of work

Since work available for dalits in these areas are informal and not governed by any labour laws there is rampant exploitation and caste based discrimination. Due to lack of skills, alternative employment opportunities and extreme poverty dalits are forced to undertake degrading jobs or work for just buttermilk rather than wages. In urban areas women work at piece rate wages in unjust work conditions and with no formal wage structures. There has been no effort to monitor these unjust conditions and set up some work standards by the state. State indifference and tacit collusion with upper castes has allowed for discrimination to continue and therefore the dependency of the dalits on the upper castes for livelihood continues as well.

4.3 Food

The key finding of the report on India by the UN Rapporteur on Right to Food is that, although famine has been overcome, millions of Indians still suffer from chronic undernourishment and severe micronutrient malnutrition, especially women and children and people of lower-caste scheduled castes and tribes. Starvation deaths have not been fully eradicated, nor have discrimination against women and against lower castes, corruption, impunity and a wide range of violations including forced labour, debt bondage and forced displacement (destroying people's access to productive resources) remain serious obstacles to the realization of the right to food. In the current transition to a more liberalized, market-oriented economy, the poorest are disproportionately bearing the costs, with undernourishment rising as public spending on rural development and social programmes is being cut back. With falling agricultural wages, increasing landlessness and rising food prices, food insecurity is growing particularly in rural areas. Recent economic growth is generating employment mostly in high-tech sectors that will not be able to absorb the loss of livelihoods from the agriculture on which two thirds of Indians still depend. Public expenditure must therefore be directed towards smallholder agriculture to improve household food security, while also improving and maintaining effective safety net programmes, including the PDS, to prevent a further regression in the realization of the right to food during the economic transition.

In sum this report brings out the interconnections between rights to livelihood and food and at the same time evident discrimination against women and dalits and the ensuing denial of rights has also been forcefully argued while examining the status of Right to Food in India. In the light of the above our fact finding has also revealed similar situation of dalit women.

4.3.1 Accessibility

- To be food secured means to be able to have access to food and hence economic access to food is crucial. Dalit families are poor and they do not have adequate and regular livelihood means. Thus they are severely economically constrained. The fact finding has shown that most of the dalit families do not have Below Poverty Line (BPL) cards to which they are legally entitled. The Public Distribution System (PDS) does not reach these dalit families making them dependent on market to buy food. With less income and capacity to buy food it is inevitable that it affects their ability to fulfill their dietary and nutritional needs. Dalit women therefore get the least food in the entire minimal share being the lowest priority within the family. At the same time the vicious poverty and lack of alternative employment which are better paid and state sponsored lead to the dependence of dalits on upper castes for work and food.
- To qualify for PDS and get food allocations, the determining factor is the BPL status of the families. The several fact findings have shown that the dalit communities have no say in determining who gets BPL status and who does not, eg. Ward Panch and Zila Panch in many places in Rajasthan respectively. No survey has been done by any other state body to determine this status.
- Those dalit families who have the APL cards are entitled to allocations, but no allocation is being made to APL card holders either.
- Dalit families also reported that they have no access to information on determination of BPL status, allocations under PDS.
- Besides very few dalit families are Antyodaya and Annapoorna card holders even though there are many who need it and would qualify for the criteria.
- Ration shops are usually located far away from dalit settlements.
- Even those who have the appropriate cards for them the allocations are not made on time.

4.3.2 Availability

The availability of food under PDS is not regular. Sometimes food is not distributed for months and then it is given in bulk. This system destroys the real objective of meeting the immediate nutritional needs of BPL families and it also fosters corruption and diversion of food into the market than going to the actual beneficiaries.

4.3.3 Adequacy

Adequacy of allocations under PDS is also a big question. The size of the family is not taken into account and the allocations are small for large families, with allocations made to "households" being just 35kg.

4.4 Water

Dalits are the most affected by lack of safe water and sanitation facilities. Women are the ones who spent hours fetching water and they also face considerable health and security risks when they go out to defecate in open at night or early hours of the morning for privacy. When women go out to fetch water the girl children are retained at home to look after the household and younger siblings and this affects their educational opportunities. Often they are withdrawn or not sent to school to act as additional help in household work. Dalit women face greater problems as they live in segregated communities located even further from clean water sources. Besides the water sources are also segregated according to caste and dalits are allowed to take water from sources only within these segregated localities which could be of bad quality and polluted. Though we could not do water testing to determine quality, one problem that we came across in most dalit communities is that the water they have access to in their localities through hand pumps is saline and not fit for consumption. This keeps them dependent on upper castes and has implications on the physical security of women who are the ones responsible for getting water even facing discrimination.

4.4.1 Adequacy

In the case of dalit women denial of access to clean drinking water, water sources and sanitation is of greatest concern. Since water is a scarce natural resource in Rajasthan there are very limited sources available to communities in general. Dalit women's problems are further compounded because of 'untouchability' and 'segregation' hence they have to travel long distances to collect water.

There are problems of privacy and adequate sanitary facilities. Lack of toilets near the homes affects the health & hygiene of women. For example in Pachala village in Dausa district dalits are not to bathe regularly, because the only source of water is located on the road. Similarly in the case of Dausa dalits were using water from a water pipe leak, very near to an open drain

Since Rajasthan is a drought hit state water sources are scarce and precious. Most dalits even when they have land do not have water pumps and with no irrigation facility farming is difficult. Hence dalits cannot use their land to grow crops to sustain their families. This makes them dependent on upper castes who engage them as daily wage agricultural labour in exploitative conditions which push them into debt bondage.

4.4.2 Availability

Availability of water is an issue in both rural and urban areas. The fact finding had shown that there are no hand pumps or tube wells with potable water, eg. Dausa has only one tap which serves a large community.

4.4.3 Accessibility (Discrimination)

- Water tank in dominant caste area in Rajasthan and dalits denied access.
- Tube wells located in dalit area are not repaired for long when breaks down as compared to water pumps in upper caste areas.
- In many village where hand pump has saline water and tube well in the locality not operational yet. Therefore have to depend on dominant caste farmer.
- In many villages dalit communities are still dependent on upper castes for water, motion etc. which leads to violence and abuse of dalits when they go to collect water or other work from these sources.

Chapter-5

More than Five decades of planning, yet Rajasthan is a under developed State: Whose concern is it?

5.1 Rajasthan: A Profile

Rajasthan, is one of the India's largest States having a total geographical area of 3,42,239 square kilometers. It was formed as a state of the Union of India in March 1949, by a merger of 19 Principalities and 2 Chiefships. One more region- Ajmer-Merwara was added to it in 1956, as recommended by the States' Reorganization Commission.

The State has a population of more than 5.6 crores (2001). The decadal growth rate of population is 28.33 percent. In 1991 the population was 4.4 crores (1991), with a density of a little over 129 persons per square kilometer, which was increased to a density of 165 persons per square kilometer in 2001. Rajasthan is also one of the states having highest proportion of Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) population in India, averaging over 17 percent and 12.4 percent respectively. The State is characterized by a non-nucleated, dispersed pattern of settlement, with diverse physiography ranging from desert and semi-arid regions of Western Rajasthan to the greener belt in the east of the Aravallis, and the hilly tribal tracts in the Southeast.

Rajasthan Human Development Report describes the diversities of the state as that, it, encompasses a wide range of livelihoods. On one hand it has prosperous "Green Revolution" peasantry in Ganganagar, and on the other hand, subsistence farmers in Dholpur. Other contrasts are reflected between the small artisans engaged in traditional crafts and the trading empires of the Marwari community and the nomadic herders of sheep and camel to the dairy producers relying on stall-fed milch cattle. Given the wide variations in terrain, social structure, livelihoods and cultural patterns within the State, it is but natural to have un uniformed growth among the regions of the state.

5.2 Major Constraints of Development of the State: Highlights

The Ninth Plan document for Rajasthan highlights some major constraints in the speedy development of the State. These are:

More than 60 percent of the State's total area is desert, with sparsely distributed population, entailing a very high unit cost of providing basic services.

Agriculture continues to be dependent on rainfall. Failure of the monsoon causes severe drought and scarcity conditions.

Growth of population continues to be high, with decadal rates being the highest in India. Growth in labour force outpaces employment generation.

Rajasthan is deficient in water (surface and ground). Ground water at many places is unfit for human and livestock consumption.

Literacy level, especially for girls, is among the lowest in the country.

Other social and economic infrastructure is also deficient.

5.3 Regional inequality (backwardness) in development: an overview

In a study undertaken in 2002 by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) on the performance of 35 Indian states (20 major and 15 small and UTs), a Composite Index was prepared on the basis of Principal Components Analysis (PCA). By using fourteen broad categories of parameters, the States were given five normative ranks used to judge the performance of each state as shown in Table-5.1 and Table-5.2

Table-5.1
Parameters of Performance Used in the Study Conducted by CII

S.No.	Category of Broad Parameters	Sub-Parameters (Number)
1.	General Achievement	5
2.	Investment Climate	7
3.	Infrastructure Penetration	6
4.	Finance	5
5.	Work Force Quality	5
6.	Social	5
7.	Environment	5
8.	Law and Order	5
9.	Affluence	4
10.	Mass Medium Penetration	4
11.	Consumer Purchases	6
12.	Personal Finance	5
13.	Agriculture	8
14.	High Value Agriculture	7
Total Sub-parameters		77

Source: Debroy, B. and Bhandari, L. (2002)

Table-5.2
Composite Ranks and Classification of States in India

Composite Rank	States
A	Kerala, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Punjab, Chandigarh, Delhi, Goa, Daman and Diu, Pondichery, Lakshadweep, Dadra and Nagar Haveli (Major States :4, Small States / UTs :7)
B	Gujarat, Karnataka, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, (Major States :4, Small States / UTs :1)
C	Uttaranchal, Andhra Pradesh, J & K, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh (Major States :5, Small States / UTs :4)
D	Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Chhatisgarh, Assam, Orissa, and Jharkhand
E	Tripura, Meghalaya, Manipur (Major States :6, Small States/ UTs :3)

The Study clearly showed that the state of Rajasthan was placed in Rank C just above the backward category of D and E who were placed as very backward. It is thus evident from the CII-sponsored study that availability of natural resources like minerals and fertile soils did not ipso facto led to high level of performance.

The study further revealed the nature and dimension of Inter regional (district) inequalities in the development mapping of the state. On the basis of a composite sectoral ranking, Top Six and Bottom six districts in various sectors of development are shown in the following Table-5.3

It showed that while Jaipur had the highest rank in case of six important sectors (Agriculture and Animal Husbandry, Industries and Minerals, Power, Banking Services and State Domestic Product), except in the case of water resources, roads, medical & health and poverty. Other districts such as Ajmer, Alwar, Kota, Jodhpur, Ganganagar and Jhunjhunun had an edge over other districts in several sectors.

Backward districts included Jaisalmer, Dhaulpur, Karauli, Barmer, Banswara, Dungarpur and Banswara, which have low ranks in case of majority of sectors covered in this study. It was observed that Jaisalmer had the lowest rank in case of agriculture, banking services and communication, whereas Dhaulpur had been the least developed district in indicators related to power, medical and health services. Barmer, Baran, Banswara, Karauli and Jhalawar also have low ranks in most of the sectors.

Table-5.3
Composite Sectoral Ranks of Selected Districts

S.No	SECTOR	Top Six, With Ranks	Bottom Six, with ranks
1.	Agriculture & Livestock	Alwar(1), Jaipur(2), Bhilwara(3), Ganganagar(4), Bharatpur(5), Sikar(6)	Jaisalmer(24), Dungarpur(23), Rajsamand(22), Churu(21), Banswara(20), Sirohi(19)
2.	Industries & Minerals	Jaipur(1), Ajmer(2), Udaipur(3), Bhilwara(3), Alwar(4), Nagaur(5), Jodhpur(6), Bikaner(6)	Karauli(24), Baran(23), Jaisalmer(22), Dholpur(21), Churu(20), Jalawar(19)
3.	Water Resources	Kota(1), Sawai Madhopur(2), Tonk(2), Bundi(3), Baran(4), Karauli(4), Barmer(5), Churu(5), Pali(6)	Jalore(19), Rajsamand(18), Sirohi(17), Jaisalmer(16), Dausa(15), Chittorgarh(15), Hanumangarh(15), Jhalawar(14)
4.	Power	Jaipur(1), Jodhpur(2), Ajmer(3), Ganganagar(4), Alwar(5), Udaipur(5), Hanumangarh(5), Jhalawar(6), Kota(6), Tonk(6)	Dholpur(21), Baran(20), Jaisalmer(19), Bundi(18), Sawai Madhopur(17), Dausa(17), Banswara(17), Bharatpur(16)
5.	Population & Demography	Ganganagar(1), Jhunjhunu(1), Sikar(2), Ajmer(2), Hanumangarh(3), Jaipur(4), Churu(5), Pali(5), Jodhpur(6), Kota(6)	Karauli(19), Dholpur(18), Sawai Madhopur(17), Barmer(16), Tonk(15), Bharatpur(14), Jaisalmer(13)
6.	Human Development	Jhunjhunu(1), Kota(2), Jaipur(3), Sikar(4), Ajmer(4), Hanumangarh(5), Baran(6)	Dungarpur(32), Dholpur(31), Barmer(30), Tonk(30), Jalore(29), Bhilwara(28), Tonk(27)

7.	Medical & Health	Kota(1), Baran(2), Ajmer(3), Jhunjhunu(4), Rajsamand(5), Bikaner(6), Sikar(6)	Jaisalmer(21), Barmer(21), Dholpur(20), Bharatpur(19), Dausa(18), Karauli(17), Banswara(17), Alwar(16), Tonk(16)
8.	Roads	Ajmer(1), Pali(2), Jodhpur(3), Sirohi(4), Rajsamand(5), Jodhpur(6), Dholpur(6)	Jhalawar(20), Tonk(19), Baran(18), Kota(18), Sawai Madhopur(18), Udaipur(17), Chittorgarh(16), Bundi(15)
9.	Communication	Nagaur(1), Alwar(2), Jaipur(2), Udaipur(2), Barmer(3), Bhilwara(4), Jhunjhunu(4), Sikar(4), Bharatpur(5), Ajmer(6), Jodhpur(6)	Jaisalmer(19), Dholpur(18), Bundi(17), Sirohi(17), Karauli(16), Dausa(15), Baran(14)
10.	Banking	Jaipur(1), Udaipur(1), Ajmer(2), Jodhpur(2), Kota(3), Alwar(4), Ganganagar(4), Bikaner(5),	Jaisalmer(17), Jalore(16), Jhalawar(15), Baran(14), Barmer(14), Bundi(13), Dausa(13), Dungarpur(13),

Source: A Study on Inter regional inequalities in Rajasthan; Social Policy Research Institute, Jaipur, 2004.

Box-5.1

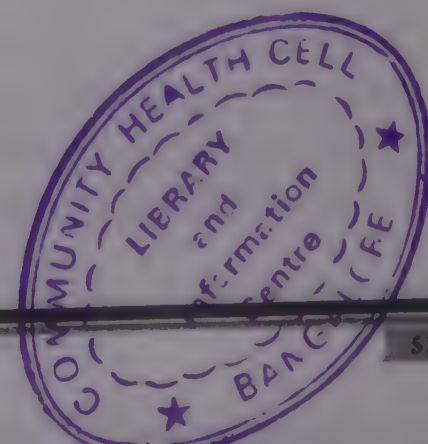
FACTS TO KNOW: AS PER RAJSTHAN STATE BUDGET 2007- 08

Department of Finance and statistics, Government of Rajasthan, 2007 data shows, that the estimated Population of the state is 6.74 crore. Of which the 4.88 are rural population and 1.59 urban respectively.

- The per capita annual income of individuals in the year 2006 - 07 is Rs.21627, which is increased by Rs.1975 from the previous year 2005 -06 (on the basis of gross domestic product)
- Annual debt burden per person in the state is (including the children to be born) Rs.11183.
- Per Capita income and expenditure for the year would be Rs.4420 and Rs.4387 respectively.
- Per capita Tax to be given to the Government would be Rs.3233.
- Every Person is likely to pay Sales Tax of Rs.3233 during the year.
- Government will spend Rs.2632 per child for primary education to 6 - 14 year old children in the state.
- Government will spend Rs.239 per person in the state, which includes Rs.5.50 paise worth of medicine.
- Government will spend Rs.619 per person in the urban area and Rs.318 per person in the rural area for providing drinking water.
- Government will repay loan at the rate 18.43 crore every day.
- Only One Doctor is available for 9878 patient in the state.

Only One Health Care Centre is available for 5002 patients in the state.

Source: Budget Samachar (Hindi news letter No - 21), February - April, 2007, Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre, Jaipur



5.4 Poverty in Rajasthan: Latest Citizens Report, 2007

In a recently published report called Rajasthan and MDGs: A Citizens Report, 2007, the following picture have been presented about the status of eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. The report states that "the economy of Rajasthan is primarily agriculture based and it provides livelihood to 77 percent of the rural population. Yet contribution of agriculture and related activities to GSDP has been fluctuating with the lowest share in 2002 03 and reaching 25.2 percent in 2005 06".

The report further states that the per capita income has shown a meager increase of Rs. 2107 during a period of six years from 1999- 2000 and 2005-06 (at 1999-2000 prices). The report has shown a varied position of Poverty line in Rajasthan in 2004-05. As per Mixed Recall Period (MRP) the poverty line is estimated as 17.5 percent. Whereas, by using Uniform Recall Period Consumption (URP) Consumption index, the poverty line is estimated as 18.7 percent. But most interestingly in both these estimates rural poverty line has been found to be better than urban poverty line.

Since no explanation is given about such a scenario, it becomes difficult to accept such data regarding poverty estimates. Because it contradicts the findings that agriculture has not shown any big progress in the state and almost three fourth of the population depend upon agriculture. The argument is further substantiated by us, how could rural poverty has been significantly better? When it is reported in the same report that almost 95.7 percent rural poor have Rs.38.50 earning per day which is less than a dollar and the earnings for the 95.9 percent urban poor are the same as the rural poor.

5.5 Role of Elected Representatives in the Development of Regions

Democratic Federal Political system gives equal opportunity to the people to voice their concerns and demand for development of their respective places of dwelling, so that they are not left behind. People elect their representatives and send them participate in the governance process in the State Legislature and Parliament. Therefore, elected representatives are expected to play crucial role in the development of their respective regions.

It is common knowledge that the more the representative is vocal and active he or she is able to do much constructive work for their regions. The glaring examples can be seen in the development of prosperous states and not so prosperous ones. In Rajasthan there lies great inequality among districts. Why such things are happening and why some areas are ahead of others in terms of development. We find the answer in the role of elected representative.

One of the major indicators of measuring the performance of elected representatives is, to find out what the representative is doing inside the Assembly. Asking questions to the government is considered as a most important role of the MLAs. Though the questions MLA are able to raise issues related to their regions and also get information about the implementation and progress of different government schemes operating in the area. Government is bound to answer questions raised by the member and provide all necessary answers by safeguarding the lapses. Thus members play a vital role exposing the wrongs and weaknesses of the government in power.

People of Rajasthan elect 200 representatives to the Legislative Assembly, with a hope that they would keep their promise to the people and work for the development of the area. Are they doing their role? Let us examine the following:

Ironically every fourth elected member of the Assembly is found to be sitting silently, preferring not to ask any question in the Assembly. In the Budget session 2007-08 of the State Assembly 45 members did not ask a single question during the entire session. So it is not very difficult to understand the development pace of one region to the other. (Budget Samachar, May-July, 2007, BARC, Jaipur)

Local Self-Governance (PRI)

6.1 Devolution of Power for Local self-governance-PRI: A Reality Check

73rd Constitutional amendment Act-1992 paved the way for Panchayat Raj Institutions to take control of management to accelerate the pace of development at the local level. Government of Rajasthan enacted the Act in 1994, under which Panchayats at all three levels entrusted with duties and functions with regard to 16 subjects listed in the eleventh schedule of the Constitution.

In keeping with the Article 40 of the Constitution and the 73rd amendment the following 16 subjects have been transferred to the Panchayati Raj Institutions:-

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Medical & Health | 2. Family Welfare |
| 3. Ayurved | 4. Renewable Energy |
| 5. Forest | 6. Animal Husbandry |
| 7. Fisheries | 8. Rural Development |
| 9. Agriculture | 10. Food & Civil Supply |
| 11. Social Welfare | 12. ICDS |
| 13. Irrigation | 14. PHED |
| 15. Primary Education & Literacy | 16. Industries |

6.2 Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan: Progress till 2002

In confirmation of the State's commitment to foster community based initiatives, Rajasthan, the Panchayati Raj institutions (PRIs) are being strengthened in the State by introducing significant changes in the legal framework governing the PRI regime. Till 2002 the following measures were taken for the empowerment of PRIs as reported in the Human Development Report 2002, Government of Rajasthan.

- Zila Pramukhs made chairpersons of DRDA (as the first step towards transferring the management of DRDAs to Zila Parishads). The Additional Collector (Development) has been made Ex-Officio Chief Executive Officer of Zila Parishad. At present the DRDA has been merged with Zila parishad, and Zila pramukh now heads the institution.
- The subjects of Elementary Education, Non-Formal Education and Literacy have been transferred to PRIs.
- The responsibility for implementation of nine schemes has been transferred from DRDAs to Zila Parishads.
- District Planning Committees (DPC) have been strengthened.
- The Rajasthan Panchayati Raj (Modification of provision in their application to the Scheduled Areas) Act 1999 has been enacted in order to provide wide ranging powers to the village committees in the predominantly tribal areas.
- Elected representatives and village society have been given control over grassroots functionaries of various departments posted in rural areas.
- A scheme for the restoration of traditional drinking water sources has been introduced.

- The Rajiv Gandhi Elementary Education and Literacy Mission have been set up for the universalisation of Elementary Education and achievement of Total Literacy by the year 2003.
- The Rajiv Gandhi Swarna Jayanti Pathshalas programme has been launched, leading to the establishment of 11,847 schools opened through the Gram Panchayats.
- Legislation has been passed whereby all sarpanchas have been made members of respective panchayat samitis and similarly all pradhans have been made members of Zila Parishads. This has restored the much needed organic link between Panchayat, Panchayat Samitis and Zila Parishads.
- A large number of powers, functions and authorities have been devolved upon PRIs in relation to subjects stated in the eleventh Schedule of the Constitution.

It may be mentioned that all over the country 7 round table discussion took place in 04-05 which was attended by Union Minister of PR, the principal secretary of PR and the minister of PR of each state. The 7 round tables brought 150 recommendations, which aimed at strengthening PRIs in the whole country. Activity mapping was one of the key recommendations, which led to notification of orders for transferring funds, functions and functionaries to panchayats. Rajasthan has completed the process of activity mapping. The orders have not been issued as yet.

However, not satisfied with the progress made by the government of Rajasthan, Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj undertook a critical review of the progress in December 2005. At the end of the review a joint declaration made by the Union Minister for Panchayati Raj and the Chief minister of the state.

6.3 Panchayati Raj in Rajasthan: Progress till September 2007

PRIA (Participatory Research in Asia) chapter of Rajasthan, a reputed National level non government organization prepared a report card in consultation with elected representatives of PRIs in the state in December 2006. The following report makes a comparison of progress actually made so far (after almost two years till September 2007) on the commitments/ statements made in the joint declaration (MOU).

Commitment/Statement in MOU	Progress as on September, 2007
1. Statement 3.6: For Capacity Building of elected representatives and officials, regular training programs are organized. All the officials and newly elected PRI members have been trained within three months after their elections by Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj & Gramin Vikas Sansthan.	Only the Zila Pramukhas of Zila Parishad, Pradhans of Panchayat Samitis and Sarpanchas & Ward Panches of Gram Panchayats have been oriented till date. Approximately 5996 members (5020 members of Panchayat Samitis and 976 members of Zila Parishads) have yet to receive any training related to their roles and responsibilities in PRIs.
2. Statement 4.2: In continuation of the exercise of devolution of already undertaken as described above, Rajasthan has already completed the process of activity mapping for 16 departments, aimed at effectively devolving functions, funds and functionaries to Panchayats. The Government of Rajasthan would endeavour to reform "Activity Mapping Notifications" by the end of April, 2006 in the joint presence of the Chief Minister and the Union Minister of Panchayati Raj. In furtherance of this, the specific steps will be undertaken.	Though the process of activity mapping has been completed in the state, despite several discussions, the government has not taken any step to notify them. Till date, Government Orders (GOs) have not been issued in this regard by the State Government. Though the MOU specifically mentions that notifications are to be undertaken by the end of April 2006. After compilation of activity mapping, the document was sent to the cabinet sub committee in January 06 for the approval. Unless it is approved, the orders would not be issued.

Commitment/Statement in MOU	Progress as on September, 2007
<p>3. Statement 4.3: For effective performance the functions devolved to them through Activity Mapping, the Panchayats would need a matching transfer of funds in respect of the devolved functions. This will require the entrustment of all budget allocations pertaining to the activities devolved upon Panchayats to the respective levels, through the creation of a Panchayat sector in the State budget. The government of Rajasthan hopes to complete this process in the budget document of 2006-07.</p>	<p>In the absence of any notification on Activity Mapping, no progress has been observed with respect to this issue.</p> <p>However, the GoR (see annexure) mentions that the separate heads are created and funds are being transferred to PRI but those are related to mainly-TFC, SFC, NREGS, even BRGF etc.</p>
<p>4. Statement 4.4: For Panchayats to effectively plan and implement the functions that have been devolved upon them, it is necessary that funds pertaining to these schemes are transferred to them without delay or diversions. As part of this process, the government of Rajasthan agrees to put in place systems that are capable of tracking transfers of funds to Panchayats, both through banks and treasuries. This process will be put into operation to track the transfers of local body grants recommended by the 12th Finance Commission from the Consolidated fund of the state to Panchayats.</p>	<p>Same as mentioned in point no. 4 and sub head 4.3</p>
<p>5. Statement 4.6: Rajasthan undertakes to put in place operational guidelines to ensure that District Planning Committee (DPC) functions in accordance with Article 243 ZD of the Constitution.</p>	<p>DPCs are formed in the state. All 32 districts have formed the DPC in accordance with the Article 243 ZD of the Constitution.</p>
<p>6. Statement 5: In accordance with the letter of the Planning Commission to the State Government the annual plan exercise for 2006-07 followed by the 11th plan should be preceded by the creation of a Panchayats Sector in the plan document, and should be built through plans from the three levels of Panchayats consolidated by the District Planning Committee, the District Planning mechanism would be accordingly re-oriented so as to ensure centrality of Panchayats in participative planning from the village level upward, on the pattern of preparing perspective plans for NFFWP. The new approach would be conceptualized considering best practices run in other States. This will be done with a view through the consolidation of village Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and District Panchayat plans by the District Planning Committee.</p>	<p>The State government has taken some steps towards strengthening the process of decentralized planning (rural and urban) to formulate the 11th Five Year Plan. The process had begun in August-September 06, where planning from gram panchayats was encouraged. The plans developed in GPs were collated at panchayat samiti. However, the process of vetting and ceilings imposed by the department did not allow all the demands of GS to be met. The district document prepared has included however all the demands in three lists- Acceptable needs, wish list and those which are not relevant as per the norms but could be fulfilled.</p> <p>The process of initiating large scale participatory planning process is definitely a strong move by the GoR, however, to what extent the planning remained participatory at the grassroots is severely questioned when the attendance of people in GS remains poor and the officials (secretary) were given task to take down the needs of people under 13 broad heads in the format. (This is being said on the basis of PRIA and partners work in three blocks of three districts of Rajasthan.)</p>

Commitment/Statement in MOU	Progress as on September, 2007
<p>7. Statement 6: It is the endeavour of the State to equip the PRIs with substantive taxation power in order to generate adequate resources for them to enable them to discharge functions and obligations adequately. In Rajasthan, there is some scope for Panchayats to raise their own taxes and incomes. There is a need to encourage all levels of Panchayats. Particularly Gram Panchayats to levy taxes and user charges. In enabling them to do so, the State agrees to undertake relevant reforms to the taxation provisions. Panchayats will also be permitted to spend taxes collected by them without restrictions or delay.</p>	<p>Separate reforms on taxation by the GoR have not been taken up. The GoR places the argument that already such provisions are in place as per the Act. (See the annexure)</p>
<p>8. Statement 7: The effective and transparent functioning of Panchayats depends to a large degree on the intensity and quality of participation of all elected members in activities of the Panchayats. Rajasthan has already established a system of Standing Committees at all levels of Panchayats, which are given a degree of flexibility and are held accountable for the performance of specific functions of the Panchayat. Standing Committees also permit greater citizen participation in the functioning of the Panchayats and are a protection against powers being solely concentrated in a few persons within the Panchayat. The Standing Committee system would be strengthened. User committees (with different nomenclatures) set up for the implementation of specific schemes and programmes of the Panchayats.</p>	<p>Committees have been formed, yet they seem more or less non functional owing to different schemes have the provisions of their own committees which seem to be functioning parallel to Panchayats than having any functional linkage.</p> <p>For instance, under primary education, the SDMC has elected representatives as members. The chairperson and secretary of this committee are teachers, who take decisions and are the signing authorities. The standing committee on education of Gram Panchayats has no role and found them doing nothing in education. (This is being said on the basis of PRIA's and partner's work in enabling Panchayats in delivery of girl's education in Rajasthan).</p> <p>Standing committees can only be functional when devolution of functions, funds and functionaries to Panchayats take place, with out which these committees would remain dysfunctional.</p>
<p>9. Statement 8: Gram Sabhas and Ward Sabhas pioneered by Rajasthan will be made effective instrument for accountability and social audit. Civil Society Organizations and NGOs would be actively associated in the process of social audit of Panchayats.</p>	<p>GoR has brought out a manual on Social Audit titled- Samajik Ankeshan Nirdeshika for all the development schemes. However, social audit under NREGS have gained considerable significance and visibility in the state, but the manual and guidelines clearly mention that it would be conducted for all the development schemes. The govt. officials are being trained on conducting social audit by the SIRD (IGPRS).</p> <p>Social audit forum consisting of members from the Panchayats has been given an instrumental role in conducting social audit.</p> <p>In the manual, the role of CSOs is also highlighted where they are seen as 'facilitators' of the process rather than the 'leaders'. They are expected to partake without expecting any financial support from the govt., which is a major shift from the approach of other states where CSOs have been given the onus of conducting social audits.</p>

Commitment/Statement in MOU	Progress as on September, 2007
<p>10. Statement 9 & 10: The Government of Rajasthan agrees to take all required steps to promote Rural Business Hubs through Public-Private Panchayat Partnerships. Welcoming this, the Union Minister of Panchayati Raj and the confederation of Indian Industry offers to support the development of Rural Business Hubs through Panchayats, so as to upgrade local skills and products and find markets for them. It is further agreed that Fifth Schedule Areas of the State of Rajasthan by PESA legislation would be a primary focus of attention in this regard.</p>	<p>The GoR claims that 11 such proposals are already through for promotion of rural hubs.</p> <p>But the role of Panchayats in ensuring that is not very clear as the direct relation between the entrepreneur and the industry is ensured.</p>
<p>11. Statement 11: In order to build capacity and leadership among categories for whom seats are preserved, Rajasthan shall examine extending the period of the reservation cycle from one to two or more terms and efforts would be made to evolve consensus in the matter.</p>	<p>GoR mentions there is no such thought for the near future. (See the annexure)</p>
<p>12. Statement 12: The Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj shall assist the Government of Rajasthan in capacity building and training of elected representatives and officials of Panchayats. This may include exposure visits to other states in order to familiarize themselves with best practices. The Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj undertakes to assist the government of Rajasthan in creating awareness among the youth and the student community. Aspirants to office in the Panchayati Raj institutions and elected representatives of the significance of Gram Swaraj. To this end, it would assist in conduction orientation and training of persons aspiring to posts in Panchayats, particularly youth and women and pre-selection voter education campaigns.</p>	<p>Training to elected representatives, BDOs and Gram Sevaks (secretaries) has been provided. Two women Sammlenas have also been done in Rajasthan as per the GoR (see annexure).</p>
<p>13. Statement 13: The Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj shall assist the Government of Rajasthan in strengthening of Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj Sansthan and 3 existing Panchayat training centres together with the establishment of three new Panchayat Training Centres at the divisional level and systems reforms on centrally sponsored schemes. Including the establishment of a Panchayat Empowerment Incentive fund to bring these in conformity with the constitutional provisions for good governance at the district and sub district levels.</p>	<p>No progress has been made towards the establishment of new Panchayat Training Centers (PTCs) in the state.</p> <p>The GoR (See the annexure) claims that process of establishing new PTCs is on and for this, support from the Union Ministry is also sought. Reminders to the Rural Development Ministry are also sent by Chief Minister.</p>

Commitment/Statement in MOU	Progress as on September, 2007
<p>14. Statement 18: We support initiatives to take up community based (Panchayat based) externally aided programmes for initiative like setting up a pilot project for Panchayat Resource Centres- as agreed by UNDP in 9 PESA districts and World Bank for 42 DPIP Blocks - PRCs (run by NGOs) at Block headquarters as it will help in strengthening the capacity of the PRIs to deal with emerging issues pertaining to governance and development.</p>	<p>No progress has been made on this issue so far. The GoR says that the proposals have been sent to the Union Govt. for setting up PRCs which is slightly averse to the original discussions on PRC.</p> <p>In the initial discussions with the GoR where PRIA was also part of the process, it was decided to begin the process under bilateral and multilateral funding sites. Therefore, under UNDP in PESA districts and under the WB project of DPIP, it was planned to initiate PRCs.</p> <p>It was decided that no separate funding would be made available and the resources under these projects would be utilized.</p> <p>But slowly, the whole idea of setting up PRCs died a slow death as many officials began to question the sustainability of PRCs and therefore may be a proposal to Union Ministry was sent for supporting this initiative.</p>

6.4 Role of PRI in Health and Medical services: Great expectation but small action by government

Great emphasis has been made in the NHP-2002 upon the implementation of public health programmes through local self-government institutions. According to the policy all State Governments were required to make efforts to decentralize the implementation of the public health programmes by such institutions by the year 2005. And in order to achieve this, financial incentives were to be provided by the Central Government.

But by so far this has remained in the papers only. No sincere efforts have been made to realize this goal and almost five years have passed. So far the PRI have been involved in social mobilization activities for pulse polio campaign or for sanitation and hygiene awareness programs, besides creation of drinking water facilities.

The Government of Rajasthan no doubt has been willing to give the Panchayats a greater role in governance and public affairs. However, as per governments own admission it is facing "some inherent problems in the interface between Panchayats and the health system. These relate to the disjunction in jurisdiction between Panchayats and the tiers of the health system, and the locational concentration characteristics of curative health facilities versus the imperative of extending the geographical coverage of preventive health. The technical character of delivery of curative health services also does not confirm to the current cultural and capacity mode of Panchayats".

While the above noted problem are real and pose a formidable challenge, it is however, governments duty to demystify the nuances and create a suitable mechanism and procedure to ensure greater participation and control of public health system through PRI institutions.

To achieve this goal investment in building capacity of local bodies for better health planning and management is essential. Has the state government made any sincere attempts? Government also should make all out efforts to make the community more involved and become partners in health care rather than remaining passive recipients of the health care delivery system. The many forms of peoples organizations in the community such women's associations, youth clubs, SHG groups and village development committees etc can play a very meaningful role in this regard.

In this way the government will be able to solve the complex web of technical curative health care and promote the much desired promotive and preventive health problems.

6.5 PRI and Education: is it doing enough?

Rajasthan is one of the first few states, which transferred the subject Elementary Education to the Panchayati Raj, keeping with the Article 40 of the Constitution and the 73rd amendment. For some years now, it is now with the three tier Panchayati Raj Institutions, i.e. Zila Parishads at District level, Panchayat Samitis at the Block level, and Gram panchayats at the village level.

As the system of management, design and implementation and accountability is highly centralized and is mostly in the hands of bureaucracy of the state government, the decentralized approach to planning is not yet been fully realized. Communities, therefore, have limited options to operate as they are governed by the complex criteria, rules and regulations set by planners at the state level. Therefore, PRIs have not been able to discharge their governance role to augment elementary education in the state, and are facing many odds to effectively carry out their responsibility. The following expectations have not been achieved so far.

As communities and people are not enough aware of about the role and responsibility of PRIs, they have not been able to meaningfully participate in the process.

In the absence of people's participation, it is almost working as another form of bureaucratic arrangement.

Local Institutions lack the capacity to manage the system of education. And nothing concrete has been done to strengthen their capacity. Even the 10th Plan Document- Elementary Education, Government of India) envisages that "The qualitative participation should mean that the community is able to have a voice and exercise its choice. It also involves the development of human, organisational and management capacity to solve problems and sustain the improvements.

Other forms of grass roots people's organizations like Mahila Mandals, VECs, PTAs, MTAs etc. who could play a vital role have not yet been actively involved in the functions of PRIs.

Community-based monitoring system has not yet been evolved.

PRIs have not yet been promoted the partnership role of the Community for micro-planning and school mapping etc.

In a society ridden with caste/community hierarchy and pervasive societal culture, the inclusive management of the education at the local level poses a difficult challenge. Even though challenges are tough, without sincere efforts to devolving the power and building the capacity, simultaneously make the people partner the local governance systems, the PRI may not be able the expected role in making a strong foundation of elementary education and also to shape the future of formal education in the state. If that does not happen, then successes in the education of disadvantaged groups such as girl children, children from Dalit, Minority and tribal communities in the state will remain an un-fulfilled dream for years to come.

6.6 Impingement of Central and State government Acts upon the Panchayati Raj Act

The Panchayati Raj Act envisaged the Panchayats to operate as viable institutions of local governance. But ironically several Central and State government Acts are impinging upon the powers and functions vested on the Panchayats by constitution.

1. Take for example; Rajasthan Agricultural Lands Utilization Act 1954 has not been amended so far to bring it in accord with the 73rd Amendment. Where as Agriculture and Agricultural extension has been entrusted to the Panchayats under the 11th schedule and Rajasthan Panchayat Act, section 50 (1st schedule iii), section 51(2nd

schedule ii) and section 52 (3rd schedule ii). Section 3 of the Act empowers the State Government to pass an order published in the official gazette in case it feels that increase in production of fodder, food or any other commodity is necessary. This section needs amendment in consultation with Panchayats before passing such an order. Section 4 deals with the utilization of land for cultivation purposes. According to this section if any agricultural land has remained uncultivated for two years, the collector can order for the cultivation of the land. Suitable amendment is therefore, necessary to insert the word Panchayat in the section and make consultation mandatory before passing such an order.

2. The Rajasthan Agriculture Pests and Diseases Act, 1953- This is another Act which has not been amended in pursuance of 73rd Constitution Amendment. Section 3 of this Act empowers the State Government to declare insect pests and plant disease within a local area. Such powers must be allocated to Panchayats by making amendment in the Act. Section 5 entrusts power to the inspector to enter upon any land or premises for the purpose of ascertaining the presence of insect, pests or plant disease and also to find out whether any preventive measures are being taken or not. Here the Panchayats should be given powers for which the Act needs to be amended. Section 10 states that State government is authorized to appoint any person as Inspector for the local area and also may delegate its power to any officials. In this section amendment need to be done to entrust such responsibility to the Panchayats apart from Inspectors.

3. Rajasthan Imposition of Ceiling on Agricultural Holdings Act, 1973- Section 2 (b) of the Act empowers the State government for raising of crops, horticulture, the planting and upkeep of trees, the breeding of cattle, camel and sheep etc, use of land for growing fodder or thatching grass or grazing etc. This section needs to be amended so as to give power to the Panchayats. Also the definition of authorized officer in the section should include Panchayats.

4. Rajasthan Seeds and Seedlings Act, 1960- Section 3 (b) empowers the State Government to prohibit or restrict the movement of seeds and seedlings. This section needs to be amended to include the word Panchayat after the State Government. Section 4 states that Agriculture Department may withhold the sale of seeds or Seedlings. Amendment is needed for including Panchayats to utilize this power. Section 5 grants any officer of the Agriculture Department the power to enter upon any land situated in the area in which the Act is in force, to ascertain approved seeds and seedlings. Amendment must be done so that Panchayats are given power besides Agriculture department officer. Section 8 empowers the State Government to make rules for carrying out the purposes of the Act. Under this section the consultation with the Panchayats should be made mandatory before making such rules.

5. Rajasthan Soil and Water Conservation Act, 1964- Amendments are required in the following Sections to empower Panchayats. Section 4- At present entrusts the power on the State Government to regulate, restrict or prohibit the clearing or breaking up of land for cultivation or quarrying of stone or burning lime or the cutting of trees and timber. Section 8 - Calls for establishment of a Soil and Water Conservation board having Minister of Agriculture Department as chairman, member of Legislative Assembly and Development Commissioner. Panchayat representation in such a body needs to be included. Section 10- Empowers the board to perform functions such as formulating policy for soil and water conservation, advise the State Government on matters relating to soil and water conservation and monitor the progress of plans. Panchayats need to be included in such functions. Section 11 - District Soil and Water Conservation Committees have been formed with members such as Collector (Chairman), Executive engineer, Irrigation department, District Agriculture Officer, District Soil Conservation Officer etc. In this committee only one member chosen by Zila Parishad is represented. The representation of the Panchayats should be increased so as to make it more representative.

6. Rajasthan Excise Act 1950- This Act has been amended to bring it in consonance with the Panchayat Act 1996. According to the Section 4(i) of the act extension has been provided to the Scheduled Areas. This section gives the power to Panchayats in the scheduled areas to enforce prohibition or to regulate or restrict the sale and consumption of any intoxicant.

7. Rajasthan Minor Mineral Concessions Rules 1986- Rule 4 of this Act prescribes certain conditions for the grant and renewal of mining leases and states that no mining lease shall be granted. This is against the PESA, hence needs to be amended to give power to the Panchayat. Rule 5 of the said Act gives power of grant of mining lease to the Mining Engineer. The real power should be given to the Panchayat for such grants of approval. Rule 42 authorizes the State Government to delegate any power exercisable by it to any officer or authority as it may deem fit. This section needs to be amended where by after "any Officer or authority", the term Panchayats need to be incorporated.

6.7 Panchayati Raj and NREGA in Rajasthan, the present Scenario

6.7.1 National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

The flagship program of Government of India, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 was enforced in February 2006 to provide 100 days of guaranteed employment in a year to any rural household adult, willing to do unskilled manual work. The other major objectives of the Act were to enhance people's livelihoods on a sustained basis and develop the economic and social infrastructure in the rural areas by generating productive assets, protecting environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural- urban migration and fostering social equity etc.

6.7.2 Key Elements of NREGA

- Households domiciled in a village (not just those below the poverty line) are entitled to register for seeking unskilled employment.
- Job cards containing photographs should be issued to all entitled applicants within 15 days of application.
- Demand for work from job card holders should be acknowledged and unskilled work allotted within 15 days.
- Works taken up should be predominantly for water and soil conservation, afforestation and land development.
- 50% of the works should be implemented by gram panchayat.
- The shelf of projects for a village should be recommended by the gram sabha and approved by the zilla panchayat.
- No contractors and machinery should be used.
- Labour intensive works with 60% wage component should be taken up.
- Payment should be made within 15 days. The State's notified minimum wage for agricultural labour is to be applied.
- Job Cards to be provided to each job seeking family, which is valid for five years and details, are to be recorded in the card.

The Act without any ambiguity empowers PRIs to be the principal authorities in planning, implementation, supervision and monitoring of the schemes. In Rajasthan six districts (Karauli, Banswada, Dungerpur, Jhalawar, Sirohi and Udaipur) were initially covered under the NREGA program. From April 07, the scheme got extended to another 6 districts, so now 12 districts are covered under NREGS in the current financial year. The new 6 are Tonk, Sawai Madhopur, Barmer, Jalore, Jaiselmer, and Chittorgarh.

How is the program being implemented? What are the limitations and how the government could correct them are crucial questions. The answers to these questions are found in some of the recent studies conducted in the villages where the scheme is in operation.

PRIA (Participatory Research in Asia) Rajasthan Chapter undertook a study in April 2007 to find out the actual implementation of section 13, 16 & 17 of the Act and ground reality of PRI's role and limitations in implementation of the program. The field study was conducted in the 12 Panchayats (Bapouti, Batda, Gujupura, Gurdeh, Hasiyaka, Mandir, Kachrouda, Karanpur, Kudhaon, Langra, Lulauaj, Maharajpur and Nanpur) of Sapotara block and 10 Panchayats (Raghuvanshi, Parita, Rampur, Chaitanpurgadauli, Mamchari, Gudala, Danda, Kotvhawar, Gunesara and Gubreda) of Karauli block in the Karauli district. The data was gathered from 10 families in each Panchayat. In total 220 families covered through a random sampling method.

About Karauli District- District Karauli is located in the Dang region of Aravali mountain range in the south-eastern part of Rajasthan. There are Five Gram Panchayats and 3 Municipalities in the district. 85.8% of the total population is living in the villages. Out of the total population SC and ST population constitute 23.2% and 22.4% respectively. The sex-ratio in district is 855 female per 1000 male. The density of population is 238 per square kilometer. Literacy rate in the district is 63.4%. Some part of the district has plane land and others have rocky area. Stone cutting and small farming activities are major source of livelihoods of the people in the villages. Because small pieces of land without any irrigation facilities and lack of employment facilities people generally migrate to other areas in search of work. Karauli does not have any medium or large-scale industries. The available small-scale industries do not have labour absorption capacities.

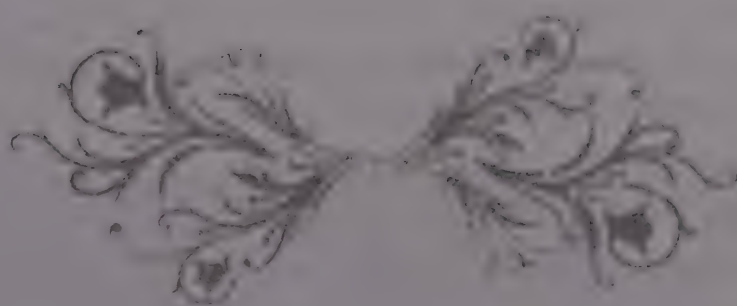
The findings of the study and suggestions- Rajasthan have been considered as a leading NREGA implementing state. Some of the significant achievements so far are that the State has been able to provide employment to 11 lakh 75 thousand and spent around 680 crore 69 lakh 38 thousand rupees for 22049 types of planned activities. Almost 90% of the activities were carried out by Panchayats by spending 507 crore 26 lakh 51 thousand rupees. Of the total registered families almost 100 families have been given the job card and the program has been able to elicit participation of 71% of women which indicates the implementation pattern of the work. In addition to all these State Government has been consciously promoting Gram Sabha involvement in planning process and social audit activities etc.

While there is an all round appreciation of these achievements, there needs some more effort to correct certain elements to improve the quality of implementation of the program.

- Some of the families who have been registered for work, particularly those families who were selected after 2002 BPL survey, are not given benefit of the program. Secondly, people are not getting work within the stipulated period of 15 days. Because of lack of awareness, people are not able to apply for work in writing. This is a cause of concern, as people cannot demand work unless they apply for it and have a receipt with them. The process needs to be streamlined at the lowest level.
- It has been found that in the Karauli district in 100 days only 25.8 families have been given employment. Not being able to provide the services to the needy villagers almost violates the principles of the program. Appropriate steps should be taken to find jobs for the families.
- In this program average wage labour per day is almost Rs.50.78 paise, which is much less than State wage rate of Rs. 73 per day. If such wage continues people will lose their faith in the program. Because of this reason, the program has been unable to stop migration. Either through social audit or monitoring committee efforts should be made to stop children working and attract more male get the benefit. It looks as if the social audit system and monitoring system is almost inactive. Because the members of the committee are themselves working for wages, they are unable to provide the required time. Therefore, some arrangement should be done so that committees can work properly.
- The NREG Act clearly empowered the Panchayati Raj Institutions to play primary role in the implementation of the program. But in reality except Sarpanch, the role of other members is not clearly

defined. The management and control is still lying in the hands of government officials. The accounts are in the name of Project Officer and Block Development Officer and they are taking all decisions regarding block level activities. For the sake of transparency in the work, ward member and the representatives of Panchayat Samiti and the Zila Parishad should be actively involved.

- For the success of the program it is very much necessary to ensure participation of elected representatives in implementation and monitoring of the programs. It has been found that in many places lot of success have happened, where the representatives have played an active role. Steps should be taken to strengthen the true participation of PRI in the program and not as a symbolic gesture.
- Participation of people in the Gram Sabha is very negligible. This is hindering the identification or mapping of activities to be undertaken in the village. It is best illustrated in the preparation of planning for the 11th five year Plan of the Government. Because of non-or less participation of people, the real decisions went to the hands of few. Therefore, increased people's participation is desired and once the Gram Sabha passes the proposals, it should not be ignored. This way people's interest and faith on Gram Sabha can be ensured.
- Inclusion of wrong names in the Muster Roll, less payment of wages, few people influencing the work clearly indicates the malady in the system. This also reflects that people do not have adequate knowledge and information about the scheme. In such cases Panchayats should take more responsibility to gain the confidence of the people. Panchayats should be prepared to provide information under RTI Act and for which their capacity building is necessary.
- People do not have any idea about the Monitoring Committee, its members and their activities etc. The local people can effectively do the monitoring of such programs, so their capacity should be improved.



Chapter-7

Conclusion

Today "Governance" is the key issue in the development parlance. People of India after a long struggle for freedom got the nation as a sovereign democratic republic, and started dreaming for a prosperous and peaceful living in the country. After the reorganization of the provinces federal states were created with an unified spirit of centre at the head to govern India as a nation. World's most elaborate written constitution was created to ensure people of the country of all faith, religion and caste to live in pride without affecting their rights and practice their beliefs without any fear.

With a democratic franchise method people were given freedom to elect their own representatives to frame policies, programs and laws in the sets of Parliament and legislatures to lead the nation and its people forward towards peace and progress. Executives given the power to implement the policies and programs and Judiciary given the power to protect the rule of law and secure justice to all.

The Constitution, in its preamble itself, directs the State, to secure to all its citizens: JUSTICE, social, economic and political; LIBERTY, of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; EQUALITY of status and opportunity; and to promote among them all; FRATERNITY assuring the dignity of the individual.

Today everything proclaimed in the constitution is found to be functioning. But has the people's aspirations been fulfilled? Is our system of governance delivering the desired result? Is the governance system fully accountable to the people's needs and desires? These are the questions repeatedly coming back to the mind, when one looks at the every possible aspect of the governing structure and functions.

The individuals, associations or institutions/Civil Society Organizations who continued their role in nation building process from the days of freedom struggle to this day, have added one more role to critically examine the governance mechanism and act as a watch dog to suggest corrections for the sake of development, peace and prosperity of the people of the country.

The civil society sector in India have been playing an important role in nation building process and aiming to protect the rights of individuals and the common good by adapting approaches beyond politics. As Judge (1994) points out, what the civil society sector does is provide the means to address the complex needs of society, motivate people to act independent of the political power, promote social diversity and identity, and enhance the relationship between governments and the market. Neither the political/legal frameworks of governments nor economic systems themselves can contribute sufficiently to society to fulfill these aspects. For this, self perpetuated groups of people or entities are necessary. (Ref: Civil Society Organizations and Social Integration; United Nations Research Institute for Social Development)

It must be stressed that civil society does not believe in tension with the state. Because civil society is independent of the state doesn't mean that it must always criticize and oppose the state. In fact, by making the state at all levels more accountable, responsive, inclusive and effective-and hence more legitimate-a vigorous civil society strengthens citizens' respect for the state and promotes their positive engagement with it. It envisions a role for civil society organizations in promoting responsive government, equality and social justice, and responses to special needs of disadvantaged groups.

A democratic state cannot be stable unless it is effective and legitimate, with the respect and support of its citizens. Civil society is a check, a monitor, but also a vital partner in the quest for this kind of positive relationship between the democratic state and its citizens.

Dr. B. R. Ambedkar rightly observed that - "As experience proves, rights are protected not by law but by the social and moral conscience of society. If social conscience is such that it is prepared to recognize the rights which law chooses to enact, rights will be safe and secure. But if the fundamental rights are opposed by the community, no law, no Parliament, no Judiciary can guarantee them in the real sense of the word".

The Constitution provides for secular government and the protection of religious freedom, and the central/State Government generally respects these provisions in practice; however, sometimes they do not act effectively to counter societal attacks against religious minorities and attempts by state and local governments to limit religious freedom. This failure, results in part from the legal constraints inherent in the country's federal structure, and in part from the law enforcement and justice systems, which at times are ineffective. The ineffective investigation and prosecution of attacks on religious minorities is interpreted by some extremist elements as a signal that such violence likely is to go unpunished.

Civil Society in this sense has a significant role to not only diffuse tensions arising out of caste and religious differences but also keep a watchful eye on the governance mechanisms and delivery of services to the people without any discrimination. The national social watch process is one such methodology and a humble attempt to bring facts of governance for better results. The State process of social watch is a further effort to come out with issues that are crucial to the people of the States. Rajasthan Social Watch Report is thus a significant addition to the national effort.

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Annexure - 1
The salient features of Rajasthan vis-a-vis India

S.No.	Item	Year	Rajasthan	India
1	Geographical area (000 Sq. Km.)	2001	342	3287
2	Population (Lakh No.)	2001	565	10270
3	Annual Rate of Growth of Population (%)	2001	2.83	2.13
4	Density of Population (Per Sq. Km.)	2001	165	324
5	Proportion of SC Population (%)	1991	17.29	16.33
6	Proportion of ST Population (%)	1991	12.44	8.01
7	Literacy (%)	2001	61.03	65.33
8	State Income at Current Prices (Crore Rs.)	1998-99	65144	1601065
9	Per Capita Income at Current Price (Rs.)	1999-00	12533	16047
10	Per Capita Income at Constant Price (Rs.)	1999-00	8272	10204
11	Area under Food crops (Lakh Hectares)	1999-00	109.59	1230.59
12	Production of Food Grains (Lakh Tones)	1999-00	106.85	2088.78
13	Consumption of Fertilizer Per Hectare of Gross Cropped Area(Kg.)	1999-00	39.49	95.33
14	Total Livestock (Lakh No.)	1982	547	4709
15	% of Forest Area to Total Area (%)	1995-96	7.18	20.93
16	Registered Working Factories-Manufacturing Sector (No.)	June1990	10038	196068
17	Net Value Added by Factory Sector (Rs.)	1988-89	208	429
18	Value of Mineral Output (Crore Rs.)	1988	1445	37652
19	Per Capita Consumption of Power (KWH)	1997-98	294.9	349.1
20	Village Electrified (%)	March 99	92.2	86.0
21	Railway Root Length Per 1000 Sq. Km. of Area (Km.)	March 99	17	19
22	Number of Banking Offices Per Lakh of (No.) Population	Sep. 2001	5.8	6.4

Annexure - 2

Literacy (in percent) in India and Rajasthan in 1981, 1991 and 2001

Area	Year	Total	Male	Female
India	1981	43.6	56.4	29.8
India	1991	52.2	64.1	39.3
Difference	-	8.6	7.7	9.5
India	2001	65.49	76.0	54.0
Difference	-	13.29	12.0	15.0
Rajasthan	1981	30.7	45.5	14.5
Rajasthan	1991	38.6	55.0	20.4
Difference	-	7.9	9.5	5.9
Rajasthan	2001	61.03	76.0	44.0
Difference	-	22.43	21.0	23.6
Rajasthan Literacy to India(Literacy in)	1981	70.4	80.7	48.7
Rajasthan Literacy to India(Literacy in)	1991	73.9	85.8	51.9
Rajasthan Literacy to India(Literacy in)	2001	93.21	-	81.5

Annexure- 3

District wise Literacy Rate in Rajasthan, 2001

S. No.	State/District	Literacy Rate								
		Total			Rural			Urban		
		Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female	Person	Male	Female
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1	Rajasthan	61.03	74.46	44.37	55.92	72.96	37.74	76.89	87.10	65.75
2	Ganganer	64.84	75.49	52.69	60.39	72.00	47.27	77.60	85.37	68.54
3	Hanumangarh	65.72	77.41	52.71	63.65	75.97	50.01	73.82	83.00	63.40
4	Bikaner	57.54	70.78	42.55	46.33	61.92	28.83	76.17	85.38	65.62
5	Churu	66.94	79.52	53.87	65.29	78.63	51.45	71.15	81.71	59.95
6	Jhunjhunu	73.61	86.61	60.10	73.24	86.36	59.80	75.00	87.51	61.28
7	Alwar	62.48	78.91	43.95	58.88	75.54	39.16	82.27	91.50	71.24
8	Bharatpur	64.24	81.39	44.12	61.44	79.95	39.62	75.18	87.08	61.47
9	Dhulpur	60.77	75.85	42.36	59.22	75.29	39.37	64.48	78.35	54.87
10	Karauli	64.59	80.93	45.44	63.61	80.45	43.84	70.22	83.81	54.65
11	Swai Madhpur	57.34	76.75	35.44	53.24	74.13	29.69	74.23	87.54	59.17
12	Dausa	62.75	80.37	43.15	61.02	79.19	40.83	77.13	90.12	62.54
13	Jaipur	70.60	83.58	56.18	62.96	79.96	44.42	78.09	87.03	67.89
14	Sikar	71.19	85.20	56.70	70.39	84.74	55.70	74.23	86.91	60.60
15	Nagaur	58.26	75.33	40.45	55.92	73.66	37.58	69.37	83.06	54.48
16	Jodhpur	57.38	73.86	39.18	46.88	66.94	25.10	76.37	86.12	65.28
17	Jaisalmer	51.40	66.89	32.25	47.02	63.09	27.45	73.99	85.70	58.33
18	Barmer	59.65	73.64	43.91	58.14	72.15	42.43	77.19	90.52	61.54
19	Jalor	46.51	65.10	27.53	44.81	63.52	25.88	66.33	82.61	47.97
20	Sirohi	54.39	70.58	37.37	48.97	65.94	31.47	77.96	89.76	64.44
21	Pali	54.92	73.06	36.70	50.39	69.39	31.76	71.01	85.40	55.27
22	Ajmer	65.06	73.96	49.10	53.09	72.60	32.72	81.69	89.89	72.58
23	Tonk	52.39	71.25	32.30	47.77	64.48	25.62	69.57	81.65	56.89
24	Bundi	55.80	72.17	37.76	51.59	68.99	32.41	73.43	85.33	60.15
25	Bhilwara	51.09	68.12	33.47	44.59	62.85	26.09	75.21	86.81	62.29
26	Rajasmand	55.82	74.05	37.89	51.93	71.23	33.22	80.58	91.11	69.24
27	Udaipur	59.26	74.47	43.71	52.52	69.52	35.46	86.19	93.35	78.29

List of Partner Organizations

- 1 Rajasthan Voluntary Health Association (RVHA)
A-12B, Bajaj Nagar, Jaipur
- 2 Grameen Ekta Bal Shiksha Samiti
Village -Khandel, Sambhar Lack, Jaipur
- 3 Gram Chetna Kendra
Village-Khedi Milk, Renwal, Jaipur
- 4 Consumer Unity Trust Society (CUTS-CART)
D-222, Bani Park, Jaipur
- 5 GRAVIS
3/458, MM Colony Pal Road, Jodhpur
- 6 PRATHAM, Rajasthan
62Bajaj Nagar Enclave Yojana Gandhi Nagar Railway Station,
Jaipur.
- 7 Budget Analysis Research Centre (BARC)
P-1, Tilak Marg, C-Scheme, Jaipur.
- 8 Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur (IDSJ)
8B, Jhalana Institutional Area, Jaipur
- 9 Centre for Dalit Rights (CDR)
C-56, 1st Floor, Siwad Area Bapu Nagar, Jaipur
- 10 Institute of Health Management Research
Near Airport, Prabhudyal Marg Jaipur
- 11 IFES
E-24, Durga Marg, Banipark, Jaipur
- 12 Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants
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Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society (CECOEDECON)

Cecoedecon is a leading NGO of Rajasthan State, starting with a modest beginning in 1982 after devastating floods in Chaksu block of Jaipur district. We are now working in more than 850 villages from Jaipur, Tonk, Baran, Sawaimadhopur, Jhalawar, Sikar and Jodhpur districts. CECOEDECON is working towards capacity building of our partner communities: poor, land-less, socially and politically marginalized & oppressed sections of the society through an integrated rural development programme covering Health, Natural Resource Management, Gender & Micro credit, Child Development, Advocacy & Networking sector.



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